Oh Give Thanks!

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We bet this is how you still feel about them...

But you know college is around the corner...

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“Taste and see that the Lord is good” (Psalm 34:8, NIV) is counsel that Adventists all over the Pacific Union take to heart every week in fellowship meals or, as they are often called, potlucks.

When the Aiea church in Hawaii gathers in gratitude after their worship service on Sabbath, families and babies are welcome participants in the fellowship meal. These three precious children are named Leilani, Jonathan, and Zamora. And if you’d like to visit, the Aiea church is at 99-005 Moanalua Rd, Aiea, Hawaii, 96701.
As I was leaving the gym the other day, I saw an older gentleman getting his gear out of the trunk of his car. Our eyes met and I said, “Hello, how are you?” His response was rather novel: “I am so glad God didn’t start this day without me.”

As I reflected on his response to my greeting, I saw it as a way of expressing gratitude for being granted another day of life. He showed his gratitude by acknowledging that God was in charge of the day. And it made me realize that I, too, was glad that God hadn’t started the day without me! Gratitude is like that: it usually generates positive responses.

I have been told that how we start our day makes a great difference in how our day goes. Expressing gratitude to God is a wonderful way to start the day. Giving thanks to God has an elevating effect on us; when we think positively about the blessings we have been given, it can put a smile on our face for the rest of the day.

Being grateful is an extension of praise, and God inhabits the praise of His people. Think of the people you meet who are effusive with praise to God. They are grateful for the many blessings God gives. Just think of His blessings in your life. If we counted them one by one, if we named them individually, I would think that most of us would come up with a long list.

Here is part of my gratitude list: for life today, for the love and forgiveness of God, for the love of my wife and children. Once I start counting, the blessings keep coming to mind. I am grateful for my health, for my loving and accepting relatives, for the calling God has extended to me be a worker in His vineyard, for a good night’s sleep, for safe travel.

Speaking of travel, I am particularly grateful for the accident I narrowly avoided just the other day. I believe that our protective angels travel
with us and often deliver us from danger. (It is easy to get sidetracked when thinking about things to be thankful for. Some remembered blessings make us pause in fear and trembling at what could have been.)

I am grateful for the Holy Spirit’s presence in our lives. I am grateful for the preservation of the Bible, which points me to God and gives correction to my thoughts.

In fact, I was talking about this with another gym acquaintance who happens to be a Christian, and he reminded me of the Psalm that states:

“Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s” (Psalms 103:1-5, NKJV).

When I read this, it appears to me that the Psalmist, David, was thinking about specific events in his life—counting them one by one—and he wrote this song to thank God for “all His benefits.” He was expressing gratitude to God.

Perhaps David wrote this after some impending danger to him or his flock had been averted. We may never know what caused him to make a proclamation that “blesses” or praises God from the depth of his soul. The phrase “all that is within me” suggests the significance of his emotional praise of God.

And he doesn’t want to forget any of God’s benefits. All is such a totally inclusive word, isn’t it? David’s song blesses the Lord for all His benefits. When one pauses to think about the benefits of God, the list is inexhaustible—there is

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Recipe Profiles

**LENTIL ROAST**
(One of Pastor Vandeman’s favorites)

2 c. cooked lentils
1 can (14 ½ oz.) evaporated milk
½ c. cooking oil
1½ c. finely ground breadcrumbs
1 egg, beaten
1 c. chopped nuts (pecans or walnuts)
1 t. salt
½ t. sage
1 T. grated onion
1 c. grated fresh carrots
1 c. grated or chopped celery

Combine all ingredients and mix thoroughly. Spoon into a greased 1 ½ quart casserole and bake in a 350° oven for 1 hour. Serve with gravy, if desired. Serves 8-10.

*Nellie Vandeman*
no end to God’s benefits.

To continue my list, I am grateful for the Seventh-day Adventist Church and my membership in it. I am grateful for our Biblical, Christ-centered message—one that has the authoritative voice of God ringing through it. It is a blessing to be authorized to preach and teach the message. It is a benefit to know the truths that the denomination has been entrusted with.

It is also a blessing to be challenged by that knowledge to live up to the message Adventists have been given. It is a blessing that could become a burden if it is not shared. The very thing that God gives as a blessing can become a burden if not shared as God intends and requires of us as stewards and caretakers of His Church.

Blessings and benefits from God are to be shared. To enjoy the illuminating truths of God but keep them to ourselves is not what God intended. He gave us the message to be shared so others can benefit from it. We are not meant to hide our light under a bushel.

I once heard someone say, “The world has taken our health message.” After thinking about that statement for some time, I concluded that God didn’t give the health message to Adventism in order for us to keep it to ourselves. He gave it to the church so we can give it to other people. God doesn’t want only the Adventists to be healthy; He wants the world to benefit from what He has given as an extension of His loving message of redemption.

Back to my gratitude list, which could go on for much longer than the space I have allotted here. This one tops them all. Near the middle of the quote from the Psalms above, there is a line about the most amazing thing we have to be thankful for: “Who forgives all your iniquities.” This is powerful. David reminds us that God is in the salvation business, and part of His operation is forgiving our sins.

I am immediately reminded of the promise of 1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (KJV).

This forgiveness of sin is the ultimate benefit, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ, our righteous Redeemer. Ellen White puts it this way:

“When we study the divine character in the light of the cross we see mercy, tenderness, and forgiveness blended with equity and justice. We see in the midst of the throne One bearing in hands and feet and side the marks of the suffering endured to reconcile man to God. We see a Father, infinite, dwelling in light unapproachable, yet receiving us to Himself through the merits of His Son. The cloud of vengeance that threatened only misery and despair, in the light reflected from the cross reveals the writing of God: Live, sinner, live! ye penitent, believing souls, live! I have paid a ransom” (The Acts of the Apostles, p. 333).

The pinnacle of all the benefits of God, we gratefully proclaim, is the act of His Son pouring out His blood on Calvary to ransom humanity from sin, death, and the grave. For this we are eternally grateful, and we show our gratitude daily by living in the shadow of the cross, living in the light that streams across the ages to power and enlighten our lives.

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Ricardo Graham is the president of the Pacific Union Conference.
One of my favorite books is *The Hiding Place*, written by Corrie ten Boom.

In the book, Corrie recounts how her family helped many Jews escape the Holocaust by hiding them in secret rooms that had been added to the interior of their home. Sadly, they were caught, arrested, and sent to a concentration camp.

In one memorable story, Corrie and her sister Betsy were sent to the worst German prison camp they had seen yet. The barracks were nearly uninhabitable, and they wondered how they could possibly survive there. Their only ray of hope came from a small Bible they had been able to smuggle when they got arrested.

On the morning of their transfer to these dreadful living quarters, their devotional time led them to 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, which reminded them to “rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances” (NIV, emphasis added).

Corrie didn’t see how she could stay in that place, but Betsy told her to stop and thank the Lord for every detail of their new living quarters. Corrie was not convinced. How could she possibly give thanks in all circumstances? They were in a concentration camp—a place people were sent to die.

Let me paint a picture for you. It was dark, damp, and cold. It was a breeding ground for disease and infection. There were no windows, it was overcrowded, and no one was able to bathe. Oh, and one more thing: the barracks were infested with fleas!

Betsy urged Corrie to begin praising and thanking God. She suggested, “Why don’t you start by thanking God for the smallest thing in the room? Thank Him for the fleas.”

At first Corrie was reluctant, but eventually each morning she woke up and thanked God for the fleas.

During the months spent at that camp, they...
were surprised to discover how openly they could hold Bible study and times of prayer. They could even sing hymns without the guards breaking things up, which had happened in the other barracks they had lived in.

Several months later, Corrie and Betsy learned that the reason the guards wouldn’t enter their barracks was because of the fleas! When she discovered that, Corrie’s entire outlook shifted. She determined that she would give God thanks in all circumstances, even for those pesky little fleas!

The Apostle Paul, the author of 1 Thessalonians, also found himself in prison, and he too saw that there was a blessing in giving thanks.

Acts 16:23-34 shares the story of Paul and Silas being thrown into prison and placed in an inner cell, where their feet were fastened in the stocks. Instead of griping, Paul and Silas spend the night praying, singing hymns, and giving thanks to God.

Around midnight, there was a violent earthquake that shook the foundations of the prison to the point that the doors opened and everyone’s shackles fell off.

What a blessing! What a reason to praise and give thanks to God! In fact, I believe that this story shows us three blessings that come from giving thanks.

**It frees you**

The Bible tells us that as Paul and Silas prayed, praised, and thanked God, the shackles fell off their hands and feet.

Sometimes we may face situations where we are trapped and feel like there is no way of escape, but I believe that if we follow the example of Paul and Silas (and Corrie and Betsy), we will be able to find freedom (mental and physical) in the midst of our crisis.

For Corrie and Betsy, it was the freedom of worshiping without interruption. For Paul and Silas, it was literal freedom from prison.

**It frees others**

The Bible shares that not only did Paul and Silas’ shackles fall off, the other prisoners shackles fell off too!

There are times when we may be going through something (big or small), and we don’t realize that all eyes are on us. Yikes! Even though we may not feel like it, we should be mindful to stay in an attitude of gratitude. Why? Because our thanks, our praise, our positive attitudes can be infectious—and as we get free, it helps others to get free as well.

**It can bring others to Jesus**

As the jailer awakened in the earthquake, he decided to take his life because he thought all the prisoners had escaped. But Paul assured him that they were all present and accounted for.

As the jailer discovered why these Christ-following ringleaders hadn’t led a prison break, something amazing happened. The jailer gave his life to Christ. Imagine that! Paul and Silas, in spite of their situation, praised and gave thanks to God, and as a result, not only is one life converted but an entire household is saved. All because they chose to give thanks.

You can choose your attitude—not just during this season of Thanksgiving but on a daily basis. Will you choose to complain about what is or what isn’t, or will you choose to find the blessing of giving thanks in all circumstances? Why not start by giving God thanks for the smallest thing right now.

Chanda M. Nunes is the associate pastor for administration at Capitol City church in Sacramento, California.
I’m not sure why I felt like making my mom’s split pea soup a couple weeks ago, but I did. It was 85 degrees outside—definitely not soup weather. So I cranked up the A/C and looked in the cupboard and fridge. I found the bag of dried split peas in the pantry, and there were carrots, a few stalks of celery, and a rather pathetic-looking onion in the refrigerator drawer. I was all set. My husband walked by while the soup was simmering and said, “Isn’t it too hot out for soup?” “Maybe,” I said, “but I’m thinking about Mom today, and I had the ingredients.” He understood.

There was no one more hospitable than my mom. She could whip up a delicious Sabbath lunch for unexpected guests and make them feel so special and appreciated. My dad always invited people over after church on Sabbath and for impromptu gatherings centered around food. Mom loved it. It was definitely her spiritual gift. She cooked up a storm, entertained her guests, and wouldn’t let anyone help her clean up the kitchen. She did it all. I am a Mary, not a Martha. And I never learned to cook like her. Except her soups. I can make soup.

Guests would always linger at our house. They could have stayed all day and into the night if it was up to my mom. She would bring out the popcorn and root beer floats after sundown and want to party on. But Dad was weary, and I was usually so “over it” when lunch was finished. If the guests didn’t have kids my age, I just wanted them to leave so I could change my clothes and be normal. Dad had the unique knack of graciously dismissing our guests when he was tired. “Shall we have a word of prayer before you leave?” he’d ask at around 4:00 p.m. in his soft, deep voice. And it was quite magical. Guests would stand, dad would pray, Mom would hand them containers of leftovers, and they would vanish. Then, while Dad napped, Mom would let me help her tidy the kitchen.

I asked her why she didn’t teach me to cook. “Oh, honey, you have your whole life to cook. No need to learn now,” she said. So I never really mastered the art of cooking. She also said, “If you can read, you can cook,” which would have been fine if she had written down her recipes. Eventually, I got her to write her soup recipes on 3 x 5 cards. She also contributed to Adventist cookbooks over the years and had to type her recipes for those projects. I have quite a collection now, for which I’m so grateful.

I loved all of my mom’s food, but it was her soup that was my comfort food. She was known for her different varieties of homemade soup as much as she was known for her effervescent personality and warm hospitality. From lentil to split pea to Norwegian fruit soup to navy bean, creamy potato, and vegetable, her signature soups rotated through the seasons of my childhood. Every Friday afternoon the aromatic blend of legumes or dried fruits or vegetables could be found simmering in a large pot on the stove. Friday night supper

Soup’s On
**Recipe Profiles**

**HOMESTYLE BEAN SOUP**
1 pound package navy beans, dry
1 bay leaf
1 t. salt
1 c. onion, chopped
1 c. celery, chopped
1 t. Lawry’s Seasoned Salt
1 c. carrots, grated or chopped
¼ c. fresh parsley, chopped
2 T. butter

Wash beans and place in large stockpot. Add enough water to cover by 2 inches. Soak overnight. Pour off water, rinse, and again add enough water to cover beans by two inches. Bring to a boil. Turn heat down to a simmer, adding bay leaf, salt, and Lawry’s Seasoned Salt. Simmer for 1 hour. Add onions and celery, simmering another hour. Add carrots and parsley the last 15 minutes of cooking. Before serving, stir in butter and season to taste.

*Nellie Vandeman*

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consisted of endless bowls of soup and a never-ending supply of bread, slathered with butter. Not only was Mom’s soup nourishing and downright tasty, it fed something more than my appetite. Her soup was a symbol of togetherness, comfort, belonging, and, ultimately, love.

I realized a few days after making the aforementioned pot of split pea soup that it was the exact 18th anniversary of her death. It was a totally subconscious but tangible remembrance of Mom on that day. No visit to the cemetery as I usually do on special days like anniversaries and birthdays, just a pot of soup. It felt right.

I’m grateful that I got to grow up in an environment of welcome and generosity. Perhaps my mom didn’t teach me to cook when I was young, but her example taught me to share and think of others from the moment I was aware. Maya Angelou said it best: “People will forget what you said, forget what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel.” I want to be like my mom in that precise way—I want to make people feel warm, appreciated, and loved.

I’ll never be the cook my mother was, but if it were at all possible, I’d like to invite you over for Friday night supper to share a bowl or two of soup and talk about what God continues to do in our lives—yours and mine—and how thankful we are for His tender mercies, for food, and for each other. Whether you’re a longtime Adventist like me or a new Adventist or one who left long ago and wonders if there’s a way back, remember this: You are family, the table is set, and soup’s on!

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Connie Vandeman Jeffery is an associate director of communication and community engagement for the Pacific Union Conference.

This article is adapted from the Living God’s Love blog [https://adventistfaith.com/blog/living-gods-love/2019/09/soup/](https://adventistfaith.com/blog/living-gods-love/2019/09/soup/)

Look for four of Nellie Vandeman’s recipes for Friday nights, Sabbath dinners, or the holidays in the “Recipe Profiles” section of the Recorder.
“Oh, Give Thanks”

One of my favorite contemporary worship songs says, “Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for He is good.” The words are taken from Psalms 107:1. What I like about the song is its repetition and focus on one thing only: appreciation and gratitude to God, for “He is good.”

Sometimes we forget that God is good. Once, when a man called Jesus good, He responded, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God” (Mark 10:18, NKJV). When I sing this song, it reminds me that if there is anything good in me, it is only because of the Father who gave His Son’s life to replace my sinful life. For that I am grateful—so with a heart full of gratitude, I can sing, “Oh Give Thanks.”

A friend of mine was going through a health challenge a few years ago. She began texting her gratitude list of 10 things to me every day: “life, family, friends, sunshine, my husband juicing for me, prayers, pain-free days, house clean, support group, Jesus.” I would respond with my list: “Good night’s sleep, walked yesterday, daughters and grandchildren, sister discharged from hospital, juicing going well,...” The gratitude lists kept us focused on the good things that were happening in life in spite of the challenges. They reminded us that God was still good.

Every now and then when one of us sends out a gratitude list, it is a sign that a challenge is being confronted. The challenge may shake the ground beneath, but the words of David remind us, “Oh give thanks, unto the Lord, for He is good, for He is good.”

Sali Butler loves praise and worship music. She can easily think of a song for any experience in life.

A New Take on Gratitude

I’m sure you’ve heard that you should “count your blessings” and even “name them one by one.” This is inarguably the start of gratitude, and yet this seemingly simplistic practice
“That needs to go in the jar!”

Through challenging experiences, it’s as though God Himself spoke this promise to us: “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?” (Jeremiah 32:27, NKJV). God has made Himself known in our lives in a new way through this practice, and for this I am grateful.

Along the way, my definition of gratitude has changed. Gratitude has become embedded in my very being as more than a practice of counting my blessings in the present; it’s a pervasive faith in the certainty of God’s promises. It’s choosing peace over fear. It’s responding to doubt with memories of times we’ve experienced His faithfulness. It’s thanking Him for future answers to prayer.

So what is gratitude? It’s a past, present, and future experience. It’s tuning in to God’s hand at work today and letting these observations of His presence inform my outlook on the future. I’m so grateful that God wants to be personally involved in my life—and yours.

Lauren Lacson is the communication director for the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Lesser Blessings

When I was a journalist, I once wrote a story about a family who had endured horrific tragedy but turned it into a way of serving others. My mind boggled at their positivity and gratitude in the face of unfathomable circumstances.

Their powerful story made something click in my own spirit that significantly altered my approach to gratitude. I realized that true gratitude is not so much an emotion or a mere thought as it is a way of life.
Recipe Profiles

PISTACHIO PUDDING DESSERT
2 packages instant pistachio pudding
1 ½ c. milk
1 quart slightly softened vanilla ice cream
(do not use ice milk)
1 small carton Cool Whip
2-3 double Heath Bars, slivered or chopped in blender
36 Ritz crackers
1 stick margarine

Preheat oven to 350 ° and while it is heating melt the stick of margarine in a 7 x 12 or 9 x 13 baking dish. Put crackers in a plastic bag and roll to crumbs with rolling pin. Add the crumbs to the melted butter, stir until blended, and then pat down to form crust. Bake for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool.

Put pudding mix and milk in bowl and beat with electric beater (high speed) until thickened (about 3 minutes). Beat in ice cream a little at a time until blended. Pour into the cooled crust. Let chill until set. Spread with Cool Whip and sprinkle Heath Bar slivers on top. Keep in refrigerator until time to serve. Serves 10.

Nellie Vandeman

Brutal honesty? Heartfelt gratitude as a way of life is super easy, and loads of fun—on good days.

I became keenly aware of many “lesser” blessings that I had been taking for granted: the ability to use all four limbs; a sound mind; the ability to wake up, eat decent food, and go out and do life; wonderful friends; and being able to end my day not having lost anything, or anyone, that matters.

Any of these blessings could be taken in a split second; yet, compared to big blessings, they often paled in my heart as being worthy of perpetual gratitude. I realized that the time to cherish the lesser blessings was now—not from a hospital bed in the intensive care unit or over someone’s coffin later.

So I celebrate gratitude by choosing to live in a way that says “Thank you, Lord.” That means caring for the physical temple of His spirit through healthier habits, letting the people in my life know I value them, and cherishing the small droplets of joy sprinkled throughout my day—rather than postponing my “Thank you” for the so-called big stuff. (Though being the hopeless dreamer I am, I never stop praying for it.)

Brutal honesty? Heartfelt gratitude as a way of life is super easy, and loads of fun—on good days. On bad days, not so much. But that too is a reminder that what I am most grateful for is the privilege of knowing the God whose abundant grace is more than enough for my sorriest weakness. And that’s something worth celebrating year-round, for always.

Cynthia Mendoza is the communications specialist for the Southeastern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.
The Student Leadership Retreat at Leoni Meadows is an annual gathering that takes place early in the school year. This year’s retreat took place on September 26-28, with the theme “Leadership Lessons from Nehemiah.”

At the retreat, student leaders from the Pacific Union’s 34 junior and senior academies met to talk about their roles on campus and to learn from each other as they plan for the year ahead.

We asked them to share their thoughts on gratitude. We wish we had space to publish all their comments—all 200+ students participated! Here is a sample of their responses.
I’m thankful for all of the amazing people in my life and their impact on me. Emma, Sierra View Junior Academy

It is so special to meet so many kind people with similar beliefs and ideas as me. Caleb, Escondido Adventist Academy

This year I am especially grateful for my family & my senior class at Lodi Academy. This year, more than ever, my class has grown spiritually and closer as a class. My class is like a family. God is what holds us together, and for that I am thankful. Leilani, Lodi Academy

I am thankful that I could come here & connect with so many new & amazing people. Erik, San Fernando Valley Academy

I am grateful for forgiveness. Going through life knowing that I can have a 2nd chance & that God will treat me no different no matter how far I go astray. I am forgiven by Jesus & that is the greatest gift of all. Hannah, Orangewood Academy

I’m thankful for this camp that brought me out of my comfort zone and helped me make friendships. Diana, Loma Linda Academy

The opportunities that I have to live in this free country & worship God freely, without any fear of death or persecution. Isabel, Pacific Union College Preparatory School

I’m thankful for getting the chance to connect with other leaders. I’m thankful for God giving me the opportunity to guide others. Torri, Holbrook Indian School

I’m grateful for SDA education. I love being able to learn with & from people who share my same beliefs & I love being able to worship our living God as a family. Toshann, La Sierra Academy
I’m thankful because I have the opportunity to be here at leadership camp & being able to expand my knowledge & skill in the leadership field. I’m thankful for having the opportunity to worship God this morning with friends that I just made & an amazing praise band we had just now. **Fabiola, Calexico Mission School**

I’m grateful for coming here & listening to what the pastor had to say. She changed my life…a female pastor changed my life and she will continue to change other people’s lives as well. **Nathalie, Fresno Adventist Academy**

I’m grateful for my amazing community! Even though the fire destroyed our town, our community supported each other. That is so amazing! **Jaron, Paradise Adventist Academy**

I’m grateful for the opportunity to be a leader for my school, and I’m grateful that the Lord gave me some qualities to help make it a reality. **Emily, Armona Union Academy**

I’m so thankful for the opportunity to come here & learn how to better serve my school. I made many new friendships & was reunited with many old ones. I am so honored to be blessed by God to have my leadership position & I can’t wait to use what I’ve learned here to be a better servant & leader. Thank you God! **Nikki, Pine Hills Adventist Academy**

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I’m thankful for the privilege of coming to camp to learn and get closer to others who believe what I believe. **Jared, Hawaiian Mission Academy**
I’m grateful for the opportunity to lead in an Adventist community, alongside others who do the same. This leadership conference has given me the chance to meet people and have experiences like no other.

Joy,
Mesa Grande Academy

I have had an absolutely amazing weekend. I met a bunch of new and amazing people. God brought me to Leoni Meadows during a tough time, and it helped me a lot. It is an amazing experience to be able to have this opportunity! Thank you. Natalie, Mother Lode Adventist Junior Academy

I’m thankful for being able to worship with friends in a safe place. Tristan, Monterey Bay Academy

I’m grateful that I was able to make new friends and share many laughs with them. I’m also grateful for all the new ideas I’ve learned this weekend from my peers. Amanda, Glendale Adventist Academy

I’m very thankful for the opportunity to lead a great school. I’m grateful for the many friends I met this weekend who are very sweet. Thank you Pacific Union Conference. Angelica, Newbury Park Adventist Academy
There’s an old story about a man who collected string. When packages came in the mail, he removed the string and tied it to an ever-growing ball he stored in the attic. Whenever he saw a piece of string, he would stick it in his pocket. At the office, he would save any string that was lying around.

When he passed away, his children were going through his things, and when they went up to the attic they found a giant ball of string that had become too large to get through the door. But, even odder, next to this big ball of string was a box filled with little pieces of string. And on the front of the box, he’d written “Pieces too short to save.”

I like to think that churches are made up of not just big balls of string but of pieces too short to save. Our stories may not amount to much by ourselves, but when we take them together, they create something. They are our legacy. And every little piece, every prayer, every song we sing, everything that happens is valuable in that process.

What does it mean to be part of a faith where everything matters? There’s nothing random or casual or ordinary.

The Gospel of John tells us: “Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom
he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home” (John 19:25-27, KJV).

Our focus is the cross. It's late on a Friday afternoon. Christ's situation has become extreme. It is clear to those who are there that no help will be coming from heaven or from Earth. The cup that Christ had prayed would pass from Him will not pass from Him—no pain will be averted, no suffering avoided.

And it was there at the cross, in the most chaotic, destructive, violent, and impossible circumstances that one can imagine, that Jesus did something unforeseen. In His most difficult hour, when everything hung in the balance, Jesus established the framework for unity between the past and the future, between the old and the new.

Mary the mother of Jesus, representing everything that has gone before, is commanded by Jesus from the cross to take the disciple that Jesus loves as her son and to embrace the urgency of his calling and mission.

And this beloved disciple, representing everything that the future will require for relevancy and effectiveness and mission, is commanded from the cross to take Mary as his mother, and to honor her and all she represents.

A new relationship is declared. An unbreakable bond is forged between what had happened to Mary and to the world when the Spirit came upon her 33 years before and what would happen to the church and the world when the Spirit came upon them, which was promised to happen. “My soul doth magnify the Lord” is irrevocably linked with “Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

It was the Gospel of John that converted me. Specifically, it was the New English Bible’s version of the Gospel of John. In 1970, my academy Bible teacher told me he thought I might like it.

I had grown up in the church, a child of an Adventist home and Adventist education, never a week without a Sabbath.

I was baptized. I attended Pathfinders. I knew the books of the Bible in order, and the commandments by heart. I had every short piece of string an Adventist kid could collect. But it was the Gospel of John that won me over; there is something different about it. My teacher told me, “You read Matthew, Mark, and Luke for what happened to Jesus, but you read John’s Gospel for why it matters.”

And so I began reading, and the Spirit accompanied the reading, and like Nicodemus (whose story we know only from John’s Gospel), it resulted in my own rebirth. It was a life from John’s Gospel that did it. There we meet the Samaritan woman at the well in the mid-day sun, and this is the only place we hear her story.

While the disciples are off getting lunch, this individual from the very margins of life engages Jesus in a deep theological conversation about

Jesus established the framework for unity between the past and the future, between the old and the new.
who can be saved, and she is transformed into a disciple, an evangelist, and an apostle.

It's also in John's Gospel that we discover that Martha, as her brother Lazarus lies dead in the tomb, has come to her own statement of faith in Jesus as the one who was sent by God to save the world.

It's in the Gospel of John that we are given the empowering promise that the church will not be left alone, and that something even greater will happen than what has been seen previously. The promise of the Spirit in the Gospel of John is one of the more clear indications that John is writing a Gospel about the future, not a history. He's not charting the past. He's talking to the church about what's going to happen.

It's in John's Gospel, and only in his Gospel, that Mary Magdalene has a conversation with Jesus at the tomb on the morning of the resurrection—a conversation that brings her comfort but also one that brings great hope to the church. And it is only in John's Gospel that we read of this extraordinary moment at the cross, where Jesus says to Mary, “Behold your son,” and to the beloved disciple, “Behold your mother.”

This is the second time that we see Mary in the Gospel of John. The first time also appears only in John, in the story of the wedding at Cana, where Jesus turns water into wine, His first miracle.

Something happens in that story that distinguishes Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was invited to the wedding feast, and so were Jesus and the disciples. She sent word to Jesus that they were out of wine and asked if He could do something about it. What He said to her was rather surprising. He didn't say, “Sure, mom,” or “No, mom,” or “Please leave me alone, mom.” He said, “Woman, my time has not come.”

Now, why would He use that language with his mother? I know what would happen if I used that language on my mother. The writer of this story is letting us know that Jesus is starting a new conversation with Mary, where He identifies her by a different name: “Woman.”

That story is never resolved. John doesn't come back to it. The entire Gospel goes by and we don't meet Mary again by name. She may have been in the groups that were following Christ around, but she's never named. She's never singled out. She's not in any of the stories. She's not identified.

But at the cross, in John 19, Jesus begins the conversation again. He completes the conversation that He started in Cana. This time He says, “Woman, behold your son.” And the conversation is now complete. Mary represents not just every woman but every person who had been faithful to God down through the ages. All of the Old Testament, the prophecies, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the history, everything that you can imagine is focused in this woman, Mary.

And she is truly the fulfillment, because
In the Word
of her role in the birth of Jesus Christ. She is unique. When He says, “Woman, behold your son,” and He gives responsibility for her life to the beloved disciple, something special is happening.

The beloved disciple represents those whom God loves the most. There are lots of opportunities for John to tell us who the beloved disciple is, but he never does. Tradition suggests that it’s John, the writer of the book, but the book doesn’t actually say. In the same way that the writer decided to write woman and not mother, he decided to not identify the disciple Jesus loves.

I think John was thinking about you. I think he was thinking about all of us as being the ones that Jesus loves. He was thinking about the church that would be ministered to by the Holy Spirit—about those people who had put their faith in Christ, not just because they had been with Him, but because of the witness of others.

So when Mary and the disciple that Jesus loves gather at the cross and Jesus sees them and says, “Behold your son,” and “Behold your mother,” He is unifying these two things irrevocably. They can no longer be thought of as separate.

Mary represents the people of God from the beginning. Of all the chosen people, she is the chosen one who becomes the mother of the Messiah. She’s a symbol of all the teachings, the history, the heritage, the whole of the Old Testament from beginning to end. It all came down to Mary and the coming of Jesus in the world.

And the beloved disciple represents all those things that were the future—the future that the followers of Jesus thought they were seeing formed in those years of ministry and were hoping for, the future that was promised to Nicodemus, the future that Jesus discussed with the woman at the well. All those people Jesus had gathered to Himself from the margins of society—these people who would become His church—were represented at the cross by the one who Jesus loved.

And this is the moment of His greatest extremity, at the very last, just before His death: the next thing that happens in John’s Gospel is that Jesus says, “I thirst,” and now everything is completed, “It is finished.” It’s the last act of Christ to say to Mary and the beloved disciple, “You belong together.”

This is a moment of high intentionality on Christ’s part. When it looked the darkest, He looked to His mother and the past and He looked to His beloved disciple and the future, and He said that if this is going to go beyond this moment, it’s going to be because you belong together: the past represented by Mary and the future represented by the beloved disciple. We’ll always be together, a single family, a single church, a single purpose, indivisible.

We stand together at the cross.

If we are looking for unity, this is where we must start. We stand together at the cross. We
are on the same side. We are not in opposition to each other. Christ has decreed, He’s instructed, it’s His last will and testament that we will always be together. It’s indivisible. There are not two churches—just one.

Perhaps you’ve noticed this is a rather complex time for our church. There are some divisive issues. We don’t quite know how to relate to our past. We don’t quite know how to make sense of everything that’s happened or hasn’t happened. And we certainly don’t know what the future holds. But Jesus has a plan. Jesus has a message. No, it’s more than that—it’s an imperative. Behold your son. Behold your mother.

Have you been in this church a long time? Do you know the history of how it was built, the sacrifices that were made, the policies that created it, the battles that have been waged over the years? Do you have many little pieces of string? It all matters.

Or maybe you are here because the message of Jesus has recently come searing into your life like a consuming fire. Maybe you’re here because, in an uncertain, chaotic world, it is Jesus who makes sense to you.

Jesus has a message for every one of us. And we can either listen to it or we can walk away, but we can’t divide that message. Behold your son. Behold your mother. There is a way to move forward, and that way is together.

This is not a political organization. This is a spiritual organization.

This is the house built by God. This is a family.

Are there any more intimate terms than “Mother, behold your son” or “Son, behold your mother”? When the Jewish people heard this, did they hear echoing in these words of John the promise that there would be a reunification when we would discover what was lost?

We don’t have to lose it. We do not have to lose each other in this terrible time that we’re in. It’s a dark time for the church. There are complex things facing us. We have complaints. We have grievances. We have suffering. We have disappointments. We are discouraged. We’ve got reason to be upset.

Most of us are cowering. We’re not even at the cross. Only one of the disciples, the

Perhaps you’ve noticed this is a rather complex time for our church. There are some divisive issues. We don’t quite know how to relate to our past. We don’t quite know how to make sense of everything that’s happened or hasn’t happened.
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beloved one, is at the cross. But that beloved one is enough, because Jesus has in mind that there's nothing too small, that every little string matters, that no one would be lost. The church is not in the business of losing people. The church is in the business of saving people.

And if someone suggests to you that we can get by without you, they are not the church. They don't speak for the church. That's not what Jesus had in mind.

Make no mistake, there's tough stuff ahead. The church is going to have to deal with it. Jesus is going to die. They're going to get together a few days later, and they're going to get it all wrong. Jesus is going to appear before them, and they're going to be confused and angry and doubting and saying things that they wish they hadn't said. And Jesus is finally going to tell the disciples to just meet Him in Galilee. That 200-mile walk will provide a cooling-off period.

There is no plan except for this plan: Behold your son. Behold your mother. There is only one church. There are not two. One church, filled with the ones in the pews; the ones in the Sabbath School classrooms, leading children to Christ; the ones helping out in Pathfinders; the community services ladies who get together on Tuesday and make quilts and talk to each other; the church boards that struggle with the budget; the deacons who come early to make sure the water in the baptismal tank is warm; those people who take literature in their pockets, in case there's a divine opportunity; those people who ride public transportation, hoping they'll have a chance to share their faith.

Those people know. Those little strings, all together, they know that there's only one church and there's only one way this works—and that is if we remember that we're a family. And that we come together at the cross.

It might sound simplistic, but it's about the hardest thing that we need to do. I'm so thankful that in churches across the world, young and old are sitting down together and they're talking and collaborating and asking hard questions. And then they come back to ask more questions.

We're better together. We need each other's perspectives. We have stories to tell and a history to understand, maps to redraw and policies to rethink, problems to resolve and crises to confront, and many, many things ahead of us that we don't understand. And none of that matters more than the fact that we stand together at the cross. That is where God starts us and stays with us and insists that we belong.

The Growing Young Adventist movement is helping churches across the country bring young people into leadership. This goes beyond merely putting a token young person on the school board or the elders' committee. This means insisting that 50% of the members of a committee have to be young people or women or people that represent the dispossessed and the people at the margins. People that look a lot more like the woman at the well than the man in the synagogue.

Thank God for these churches that are taking brave steps to try and talk to each other. And it's not just big churches; it's small churches who say, “Well, we just have this little piece of string, but it goes in a big box, and we're not getting lost.”

And it isn't only about the young and the old. It's also about race and gender and culture. It's about rich and poor. It's about
those who have access to resources and those who have been denied. It’s about those who have the power and those who want the power. It’s about those who want to give away the power and those who think they’ll never be able to take it.

From the cross, Jesus calls us to deeper, more powerful, and more personal relationships. Behold your son. Behold your mother. Go beyond the blood we share to the blood that was shed.

And can we seriously say that we’re honoring our history, our mother, when we deny full agency to women who represent more than half of our community?

The word from the cross could not be more plain: Behold your mother. How long do we dare to ignore this?

Here is an excellent description of what happens when a church takes this command seriously:

“The church is one body with many members, called from every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. In Christ, we are new creation; distinctions of race, culture, learning, and nationality, and differences between high and low, rich and poor, male and female, must not be divisive among us. We are all equal in Christ, who by one Spirit has bonded us into one fellowship with Him and with one another; we are to serve and be served without partiality or reservation. Through the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures we share the same faith and hope, and reach out in one witness to all. This unity has its source in the oneness of the triune God, who has adopted us as His children.”

Do you recognize that? It’s the 14th fundamental belief of the Adventist church, titled “Unity in the Body of Christ.” And in the light of the cross, can we take any of these words less than seriously? Are there any of these words that we can defer for another generation? Is there any of the spirit of this fundamental belief that we dare ignore?

May the answer to that be found in these words from the Apostle Paul: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will” (Romans 12:1-2, NIV).

Ray Tetz is the director of the Communication & Community Engagement Department of the Pacific Union Conference.
I was vacuuming on a Friday afternoon in 2012 when a new ministry idea flooded my mind. I had seen many challenges in youth ministry that I wasn’t quite sure how to address, and this idea seemed to be the answer.

At the time I was the youth director for the Arizona Conference. I would run conference-wide events throughout the year, and the youth would leave excited about what they had just experienced. The problem was that when they returned home, life quickly adjusted back to normal, and they would say that nothing had really changed. It seemed as though their spirituality was feast or famine—depending on if there was an event or not. Unfortunately, it was mostly famine. While events were important, our youth needed someone investing in their lives on a daily basis—someone who could help them grow and stay connected while they matured in their walk with Christ.

Pastors would call me and plead, “Erik, I desperately need a youth pastor.” What’s it going to take?” I would have to explain that all our churches needed youth pastors, but unfortunately their church’s tithe was too low to qualify.

I had been a youth director for five years. I had seen other young youth directors come and go. Many would give it a try but then decide it wasn’t for them. I worried this was largely due to the fact that there was no real training for conference youth directors—it was sink or swim. If there were a way for youth directors to be trained, would they experience success and not leave so quickly?

While studying at Andrews, I had met an undergrad theology major named Jaime Vargas. He shared that he was afraid he wouldn’t get hired after he graduated—and that, even if he did get hired, he wouldn’t know how to be a pastor. While he was being thoroughly trained academically, he didn’t have a clue as to how to lead a church.

All of these challenges had been rolling around in my mind for quite some time. Then the light bulb came on! The idea of a volunteer youth pastor internship program came together all at once while the vacuum cleaner was in my hand!

The next week I called to ask Vargas if he would be interested in a one-year program in which he would be trained at the local church and the conference youth department. The internship would give him experience with youth groups, Pathfinders, Bible studies, church boards, elders meetings, preaching, weeks of prayer, evangelism,
youth retreats, Pathfinder camporees and fairs, and summer camp. Most of all, it would provide mentorship from the local church youth leader, church pastor, and the conference youth director. Each intern would be provided with a living allowance, housing, car, gas, and accidental health insurance. Vargas responded enthusiastically.

About the same time, Jesse Siebel, youth director for the Hawaii Conference, had been impressed with a similar idea. As we connected at a youth directors’ meeting, Siebel and I compared notes and began to merge our plans. These plans would eventually lead to Vargas coming to Hawaii to be our first intern. Siebel started the program and within a few months transitioned to pastoring. And I became the youth director for the Hawaii Conference.

Since that time, the Volunteer Youth Pastor Internship Program has grown substantially. We have had 21 interns who have helped us improve the effectiveness of the youth ministries department in ways we never dreamed possible. Hundreds of Bible studies have taken place, followed by many of our youth making a lifelong commitment to Christ through baptism. Many of our interns have been hired by conferences to be pastors or associate conference youth directors, or have continued their academic studies at Andrews University.

Vargas went back to finish his undergraduate degree at Andrews University. He was then sponsored to the seminary by the Hawaii Conference and just returned to us in May. He is currently serving as the associate pastor of the Aiea church. This past August we entered the next phase of our internship program. I had the privilege of giving a piece of the youth department away by making Vargas the new Pathfinder director for the Hawaii Conference.

“Having an intern can add an incredible dynamic to the great things already happening in your church,” said Siebel. “As a leader, you’ll be able to invest in a new generation. As a congregation, your church will have a chance to encourage a young person in their calling. As an intern, you’ll get to see firsthand what it looks like to serve and lead a ministry.”

I’m thankful for vacuum cleaners and inspiration, but even more that our church is willing to invest in our future pastors. My hope and prayer is that someday every church will have an intern youth pastor to help in reaching our youth and growing the kingdom of heaven.
J ust hours after the Camp Fire destroyed Paradise, California, and the surrounding area, Adventist Health coordinated several hotlines and call centers for those impacted by the disaster. In the days and months after the fire, Adventist Health associates managed calls ranging from housing needs to prescription medications and clinic appointments. For Phil, an Adventist Health IT Support Center analyst, one call stood out above all the others.

Almost two months after the fire, Steve called the hotline regarding his future work plans at Adventist Health. Steve had worked at Adventist Health Feather River for 13 years. He spent the first nine years as a security guard and the next four in nutrition services. In addition to losing his job as a result of the fire, his house had burned down.

Adventist Health kept all associates on payroll for three months after the fire. As the February deadline approached, Steve began to actively seek out another opportunity at Adventist Health. He called the support center to get a copy of his résumé. That’s when Phil picked up the phone.

Phil quickly realized that Steve was stressed about securing a new job. During the 76-minute call, Phil helped Steve find his résumé; however, he provided him more than just the document. He gave Steve an outlet to voice his frustrations, provided a sense of relaxation, and reassured Steve that God is in control.

“It was as if God Himself sent me an angel to restore not just my personal faith but my faith in Adventist Health as well,” Steve said of Phil. “I simply believe that God used Phil right at that moment just to let me know ‘I’m still here.’”

Steve was so comforted and impressed by Phil’s assistance that he wanted to get in touch with Phil’s supervisor to commend him for his work. The next day, Steve contacted Diane.

Diane recommended to Steve that he apply to work at the café in the new Adventist Health headquarters in Roseville, California, when it opened in April of 2019. Steve loved the idea since he had a background in nutritional services and wanted to continue his career with Adventist Health.

After the new campus opened in April, neither Phil nor Diane were aware that Steve had been hired to work at the Vitaliz Café. After Steve’s story was shared at an associate town hall meeting, Diane and Phil realized the full-circle connection.

Even through the chaos and uncertainty of life had thrown Steve, all it took was a phone call about his résumé to restore his faith in God.

Learn more about how the Fire Assistance Fund helped associates like Steve at AdventistHealth.org/CampFire.
Omakase: Fine Art Grad Partners with Regional Chef

By Becky St. Clair

Growing up, I did a lot of drawing with my grandpa,” recalls Celeste Wong, 2018 fine arts graduate. She also doodled a lot on her own, and in high school she learned how to crochet and paint. One day, on a whim, she flipped through the PUC course catalog and saw they offered ceramics.

“That was a bucket list thing for me,” she says. “I wanted to try making pottery on the wheel, so I signed up for the class. It didn’t take long for me to switch my major to fine art.”

Since that time, Wong has focused primarily on ceramics, having found her “true love” in art. Though Wong now has a permanent position at the ceramics studio in which she interned during college, on the side she continues creating and selling her own art. This, coupled with her network developed during and after her time at PUC, led to a connection with David Duy Ngo, a Sacramento area chef who specializes in omakase.

Omakase is a Japanese phrase that means “I’ll leave it up to you.” It is typically used in situations where the customer allows the chef to prepare a meal rather than choosing what to order.

“David invited me to collaborate on a 12-course charity fundraiser he was organizing,” Wong explains. “I created artistic dishes on which his culinary creations would be displayed and served.” They also brought onboard Brandon Bowman, a local professional florist.

“It wasn’t about just one of us or our work,” says Wong. “It was about bringing David’s sushi, Brandon’s flowers, and my plates together in a personal, unique, and well-thought-out way.”

Eventually Wong plans to start her own successful studio, relying on what she has learned at PUC about professional practices and business strategies for artists.

“I still use some of the homework assignments I did for that class,” she admits. “Things like creating an invoice, putting together a contract—I haven’t changed the format I use since that class because it works!”

Wong also credits her communication classes for giving her the skills she needs to work with others.

“My PUC professors really shaped my future,” Wong says, “and they continue to mold me in the present. They always have a word of advice for me any time I ask, whether professional, academic, or personal, and the community the art department created for me has proven invaluable.”

Wong continues to grow her professional artistic network, thanks to the connections she was able to develop during her college years. Fellow classmates have helped her with photography, a website, and more.

“Community is so important,” Wong says, “especially as an artist. You can’t navigate this profession alone, and I’m grateful that, thanks to PUC, I don’t need to.”

Check out Wong’s work, including the dishes she created for the omakase event, and follow her ongoing projects on Instagram @cwongceramics.

For information about fine arts at PUC, visit puc.edu/visual-arts or call (800) 862-7080.

PUC would like to correct a statement made in the September issue of the Recorder. We mistakenly claimed that Daniel Amponsah was the first LLU grad to be accepted into residency at Harvard. This is incorrect; he is one of several over the years. Henry Lamberton, associate dean for student affairs at LLU, stated, “Daniel is an exceptional student who not only excelled academically, but also led our main student community service outreach and contributed musically, among other things. We hope he will return to teach.”
One Life Provides Encouragement to Students

by Cynthia Mendoza

High school students in Southeastern California Conference started their school year with a dose of encouragement and inspiration at One Life, held at Cedar Falls in August. This year the weekend drew over 160 youth from public and Adventist schools as well as from home school programs.

One Life is organized by a team of youth pastors. The event, which is nearing its 10th year, takes place shortly before most schools begin.

“We want to provide an inspiring weekend focused on Jesus and personal growth before school starts,” said Aren Rennacker, one of the One Life organizers and youth pastor at Calimesa church, about the purpose of the event.

This year’s presenters included Linda Nystrom, chaplain at Adventist Health in Paradise, Calif.; Uriel Herinrinna, ministry coordinator at Orange Coast church; Sam Leonor, administrative director for mission identity and spiritual care at Adventist Health for the Central and Southern California regions; and Dilys Brooks, chaplain at Loma Linda University.

However, One Life isn’t just about youth showing up and listening to adults. It is also an opportunity for them to engage in all aspects of the weekend, including leading out in discussions and picking the theme, which this year was “Enough.”

“Youth sometimes feel like they’re not enough, either for God or socially,” Rennacker said. “But we are all incredibly valuable to God as people.”

Presentations were followed by youth-led conversations that fostered dialogue and working together through tough questions. Rennacker added that many youth are frustrated by the current state of the world, so the theme also included saying “enough” to the issues that negatively impact society.

For some youth, One Life is something they look forward to every year because of the encouragement and fellowship it provides as they head into a busy academic year.

“I have been going to One Life for the past three years, and I absolutely love it,” said Natalia Sarrafian, a senior at La Sierra Academy. “I love starting the school year with a strong foundation in Jesus, learning new songs, and spending time with my friends.”

“We hope it proved to them that they are enough, simply for who they are,” Rennacker said about what he and fellow organizers hope young people took away from the event. “As Christians we are called to share with others how valuable they are. God offers reconciliation but also constant reminders of our inherent worth.”

High school students engage in outdoor activities at One Life at Camp Cedar Falls.
Southeastern California Conference

Summer Camp Makes a Difference in the Lives of Youth and Families

By Natalie Romero

Since 1961, Pine Springs Ranch (PSR) has been a summer retreat for those looking to make new friends, try new things, and learn more about their Creator. During this year’s summer camp, which ranged from Cub Camp to Teen Camp and Family Camp, camp directors and attendees noted that the atmosphere was different from past years.

In June, PSR’s Family Camp was the largest group they had hosted in more than seven years. With more than 200 campers, Jeremy Cruz, summer camp director, had his hands full.

“We had to work extra hard,” he explained. “This camp is unique because campers of all ages are permitted to attend. We have some families who come every year, and they’re very welcoming and friendly with new families, so we’re doubly blessed.”

As the summer went on, Cruz noted that other summer sessions had new dynamics as well, particularly the Teen Camp.

“It was completely different this time,” said Cruz. “These teens have been coming to camp for several years, and now it felt more like Family Camp to us. These youth give me hope for the future of our church.”

Four campers were baptized during their summer sessions, choosing to make their public commitment at a place that is close to their hearts. An additional 439 campers indicated during worship sessions that they had decided to follow Christ.

“These are the choices that make camp an amazing investment in the spiritual growth of each child,” Cruz reaffirmed.

For Victor Diaz, 17, the summer spent at PSR was one full of new experiences. Diaz spent one week as a camper and another week as part of the volunteer training program.

“I always wanted to participate in staff activities,” said Diaz. “I wanted to make an impact on a child’s life, in the same way a staff member changed my life eight years ago.”

Diaz enjoyed the experience so much that he’s planning on returning next summer to work as a staff member.

“My favorite part was being there for God’s mission—learning how to be a leader and how to help those who need it.”

PSR Family Camp brings together families for fun activities, worship, and relaxation as a family unit.
STEAM Lab Helps Propel Student Learning

BY CYNTHIA MENDOZA

What do you get when you combine science, technology, engineering, art, and math? A lot of “steam” that helps propel elementary students in critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and other life skills.

At the newly opened STEAM lab at La Sierra Academy, students engage in hands-on learning in the various disciplines in a way that is practical and fun and helps them navigate the world around them.

“We wanted to create the opportunity for real-world experiences. It’s an excellent way of learning,” said Elizabeth Muñoz-Beard, head principal. “Students really enjoy it and talk to their parents about what they did.”

The idea for a STEAM lab is an extension of the concept of STEM education, which focuses on science, technology, engineering, and math—but with an art component as well, adding the A. “It’s important for students to work with both sides of the brain,” said Sarah Ebner, art teacher, regarding the addition of the art component, which utilizes more creative thinking.

The STEAM Lab is a project-based classroom that is available to all students in grades TK to 6. Students can work on projects that include coding, electronics, 3-D design and printing, designing and building birdhouses, creating e-books, video production, and more.

The process of engaging in these projects includes identifying a real-world problem, asking questions to explore and solve the problem, developing solutions, and then exploring hands-on activities that bring all those elements together.

In the STEAM lab, students are graded on three criteria: their learning target (what they are expected to know and able to do by the end of the lesson); their developed strength (identification of their strongest talents and skills); and self-reflection and feedback (they identify what they did, what they enjoyed, difficulties, what worked, and what they would do differently next time).

The practical skills, as well as the critical and creative thinking that the entire process requires from start to finish, also help prepare students for college and future careers.

On the spiritual side, through engagement in the STEAM lab, students also learn a practical application of Colossians 3:23, which says, “And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men” (NKJV).

“Students are loving it,” Ebner said about the students’ STEAM lab experience. “There is an atmosphere of learning and excitement in doing things they don’t usually get to do.”

Holding the giant scissors, Michael Conner, left, principal of La Sierra Elementary, and Elizabeth Muñoz-Beard, right, head principal of La Sierra Academy, cut the ceremonial ribbon at the grand opening of the school’s new STEAM lab.

PHOTO: FINNY PARCHAMENTO

PHOTO: CYNTHIA MENDOZA

PHOTO: FINNY PARCHAMENTO/LSA
Truly a Ministry:
Pathfinders in SECC

by Becky St. Clair

Camping. Knot tying. Adventist history. Yellow scarves. Bible Bowl. “Keep the morning watch.” These are just some of the things that come to mind when Adventists hear the word Pathfinders. But Pathfinders is so much more than that. Pathfinders is a means not only to connect young people to Christ but also to connect them with ways to help others make that connection.

“Being a Pathfinder is fun,” said Brayden Quijada, a Pathfinder from the club at Waterman Visayan church (WVC). “I can interact with many kids of different ages, and it helps me grow closer to God. I like the workbooks and honors, and especially worship with my friends.”

Quijada is one of nearly 50 members of the WVC Pathfinder club. In August, they, along with 57,000 other Pathfinders, leaders, parents, and pastors, attended the International Pathfinder Camporee in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. And for Quijada, there was something special about this camporee: He was baptized.

“Baptism is important to me because it’s like living a new life with God,” he said.

Twenty-four of the WVC Pathfinders made similar public declarations of their love for Christ during the camporee. This is just one example of how Pathfinder work has a profound impact on young people in the church—and in turn these young people deeply affect the world around them.

“I always told my Pathfinder directors that their primary purpose as leaders was not the classwork or the honors,” said Rudy Carrillo, former youth director for SECC, who retired in 2018. “Instead it is to present Christ to the kids.”

Pathfinders has its roots in SECC; the first club on record to be organized was in Anaheim in the late 1920s. John Hancock, then conference youth director, began a club in Riverside in 1946, establishing the program that extended to the world church in 1950.

When Carrillo arrived at SECC in the early 1980s, he fine-tuned the volunteer coordinator program already in place, and for the next 30 plus years Pathfinders as an organization “grew by leaps and bounds,” he said.

According to Carrillo, on Sabbath morning during the 2005 General Conference Session in St. Louis, Missouri, the question was asked, “How many of you would say that Pathfinders played a role in your spiritual life?” About three-quarters of the people in the room raised their hands.

“It brought tears to my eyes,” recalled Carrillo. “I never could have imagined how many laypeople sitting in those pews were affected by this ministry to youth.”

The extent of this impact is made clear to Carrillo every time he travels. He recalled stopping at store in a remote area during a road trip. A man who recognized Carrillo came up to him and hugged him, saying, “Thank you for everything you did. Pathfinders changed my life.”

Today there are more than 3,000 Pathfinders in SECC and approximately 2 million Pathfinders globally. Those numbers grow yearly.

“I always told my directors that they weren’t in those roles by chance,” Carrillo said. “They were in it by divine appointment. Pathfinders is truly a ministry.”

For resources and support for your local Pathfinder club, or for information on how to start one in your church, visit seccyouth.com/home/pathfinders.
Men and Young Men’s Retreat

By Phil Draper

The 21st annual Arizona Men and Young Men’s Retreat was held September 13-15 at beautiful Camp Yavapines in Prescott, Arizona, with 80 attending. The retreat is an annual event usually held the last weekend of September. This year it was held earlier to accommodate John Bradshaw’s “It Is Written” meetings in Mesa, Arizona.

The retreat is designed specifically for individuals who desire to connect with God and His church. Those who attend find encouragement and inspiration to be the men God created them to be.

Mike Ortel, who has worked with the Men’s Retreat for several years, commented, “The reviews from men who attended were off the charts. They gave an A+ on everything and most plan to return to next year’s event.”

Guest speakers included Freddie Russell, Sammy Reyes, Brad Newton, and Eddie Turner.

Freddie Russell spoke on the importance of being baptized by the Holy Spirit. He pointed out from scriptures the effect that the Spirit would have on our Christian witness. He explained that we can receive the gift of the Spirit through prayer only—through much prayer.

Sammy Reyes is an artist, storyteller, writer, and creative force who connects imagination and inspiration to create art and beauty. He’s best known for his integration of creativity and spirituality as a pastor.

Brad Newton has served as executive secretary of the Pacific Union Conference since 2008. He shared his journey of growth in Christ that led him to greater service for the Lord.

Eddie Turner is a giant of a man with an equally large heart. As a pastor and teacher, he knows how to reach young people for Jesus and was an inspiration to all.

There were many breakout sessions in which the men could share their stories and gain strength from each other. The entire weekend was immersed in prayer. Men joined their arms in a giant circle and prayed for each other with great conviction and sincerity.

Arizona Conference President Ed Keyes commends the men who made the weekend so successful. “Many years ago, Dennis Rizzo began Men’s Ministries with just a few men who wanted a closer walk with Jesus. Over the years this event has grown to be a much-anticipated retreat for many men. I commend Dennis, Mike Ortel, and Manny Cruz and their teams for a job well done as they work to make Men’s Ministries the success it is today.”

Next year’s Men and Young Men’s Ministries Retreat will be September 25-27. Men from throughout the Pacific Union are cordially invited to attend this spiritual event. For information visit https://azmensretreat.org/.
What is kosher? That is not a typical way for a witnessing opportunity to take place, but that was how Thunderbird Adventist Academy Juniors Ntakirutimana Francine and Glenielle Sta. Ana explained their experience to me.

The adventures began as Ntakirutimana and Glenielle departed for Harvard. The flight was scheduled with two connections, but the first flight was canceled due to an oil leak on the plane. This led to being booked on another flight and free checked luggage, which was a blessing because the connections were so close they had to run to board in time. Even when their luggage was then temporarily lost, they were not discouraged. They were blessed with a host family that had clothes that fit them perfectly to begin their first day at Harvard.

As Harvard scholarship recipients, Ntakirutimana and Glenielle were welcomed to the Harvard University campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to take part in a weeklong summer business program.

One day at lunch, Ntakirutimana noticed that another participant, Michael, had a meal marked “kosher” and asked, “What is kosher?” This simple question opened dialogue about religion and beliefs, a conversation that would last all week long. As Michael explained what a kosher meal was and more about the Jewish faith, Ntakirutimana and Glenielle shared about being a Seventh-day Adventist.

From her wallet, Ntakirutimana pulled a Glow Tract, “Why I go to church on Saturday,” left over from her summer work with Youth Rush, and gave it to Michael. Later, Michael would read that same Glow Tract aloud to the group. As they were telling the story, Glenielle looked at me with a big smile and said, “We didn’t have to say anything; he was witnessing for us!”

Several times in telling their story, both girls expressed, “We saw God through everything!” Each day Ntakirutimana and Glenielle rode the train to and from campus, leaving Glow Tracts on their seats for someone to find. One evening on their way home, they boarded the wrong connecting train and were not sure how to navigate back to the correct train home. To add more stress to the situation, one of their phones had died and the other only had 5% battery. Quickly they made calls for guidance to get back on the right train, praying the battery would hold out until they made all the right connections. Prayers were answered, and it wasn’t until they were on the last train home that the phone died.

What I thought was going to be an interview about studying at a prestigious university campus quickly became an excited and animated story about how two TAA students embraced their opportunities to learn and witness. As Ntakirutimana and Glenielle left my office, I realized how honored I was to hear and share their story. My heart burst with joy that these young ladies showed confidence as they energetically shared the love of Jesus Christ on the campus of Harvard University.

Both girls appreciated the opportunity and encourage others to take part in the program. They look forward to attending the Harvard University pre-med program next summer. Who knows what stories we will hear from their next adventures as they discover God showing up through everything.
Doctor Presents at Local Schools to Warn Students on Dangers of Vaping

Pulmonary and critical care physician offers insight on the risks of electronic cigarettes.

By Janelle Ringer

Loma Linda University Health physician Laren Tan last month began a regional tour to speak with junior high and high school students about the dangers of vaping. The issue has stepped into the national spotlight as several deaths have been confirmed in connection with the use of electronic cigarettes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, more than 500 cases of a new vaping-related disease have been reported since April.

Tan is one of many doctors concerned with the health risks of vaping. The founder and director of the Loma Linda University Health Comprehensive Program for Obstructive Airway Diseases treats the most severe pulmonary cases—everything from non-reversible asthma to dangerous high-blood pressure of the lungs to emphysema. Vaping, he says, has served more as a gateway for teens to smoke than a tool for adults to quit.

Starting with a school in Riverside, Tan spoke to students about the dangers of both the substance being vaped and the lesser-known hazards of the activity. Research has shown that heated coils release metal particles—such as lead and nickel—into the user’s lungs.

“We don’t have all the data on the long-term effects of vaping on the body, but we do know that the short-term effects can be detrimental to lungs, especially in teens as their lungs are still developing,” Tan told an audience at La Sierra Academy. “If a teen already has underlying respiratory conditions, such as asthma, they could be at a greater risk of permanent damage or even death.”

In his presentation, Tan breaks down the anatomy of e-cigarettes, explaining that the concentration of nicotine in the cartridges depends on the amount of substance inhaled and the concentration in the e-liquids. “Consistency in concentration and composition of the liquid varies between different manufacturers, and with no FDA regulations, it’s difficult to determine how much nicotine—or other unknown substance—is being inhaled.”

One substance that has been identified in many common flavorings for vapes is diacetyl. “In the medical community we have long known that inhalation of diacetyl causes bronchiolitis obliterans, also known as popcorn lung,” Tan said. The inhalation of diacetyl scars the tiny air sacs or alveoli of the lungs, which is extremely problematic in both developing and already developed lungs.

“Through speaking to students, teachers and counselors, we hope to arm our communities with the information they need to make an educated decision for themselves and give the potentially life-saving information to people who need it,” Tan said.
Pass the whip cream and caramel for some extra drizzle on the pumpkin pie. Sound familiar? Food can be a gateway to happiness during the holidays—a gateway that can open the floodgates to unhealthy habits, which many heart-conscious people hope to avoid.

A nutritionist from the Loma Linda University International Heart Institute offers four unique tips to help guide those trying to make the holiday season a healthy, hearty one.

Nutritionist Julianne Penner says making the holiday season a healthy one involves more than just watching what you eat. She says we all know to watch out for cholesterol, trans fats, and high fructose corn syrup. But in order to keep staying away from the bad things, you have to implement good habits.

“You can switch this butter for that butter,” Penner says, “but there are critical tactics outside of food swapping that can ensure a healthy holiday and lifestyle that will last longer than the holiday season.”

Penner shares these four tips:

Display your values. The holiday season is not just a time to meditate on your thankfulness, but it is also a time to reflect on your values and what they mean. Penner suggests thinking of your family, health, connections, or whatever you value most or what has led you to this new journey of health. She says to write it down often, take a picture of it, or think about it throughout the day. Keeping that at the forefront will remind you why you are trying to be heart healthy and turn your life around long-term. That will be your motivation throughout the holidays.

Have realistic goals. Every little consistent step counts. Penner says to create a small habit that you can stick to because it will lead to long-term dedication. It can be as small as simply doing a push-up a day or sticking to your daily water goal—as long as it’s something small and realistic. That consistency can translate into a strong will that can help you fight overindulgence during the toughest times.

Plan ahead. No matter where you choose to eat for the holidays, you can always control one or two meals and how you start the day. Try to do something active in the morning or eat a healthy breakfast and even lunch if you can before the holiday dinners. Planning to have one part of the day dedicated to something heart healthy can help balance out the unhealthy portions.

Sleep. If all else fails, try to sleep at least 7 to 9 hours a night. A lack of healthy sleep can throw off your hormones and can cause you to want to eat carbs or unhealthy foods.

Penner also encourages people to take it easy with her tips or any other guide they may come across for a healthy holiday. She says if you can only choose one thing—such as removing cheese for the holiday diet—that is good enough.

“Even if I give you this list, choose one of these to focus on during the holidays,” Penner says. “You do not want to stress out trying to incorporate all of these. Make it work for you, and you will improve every day and every year.”

See the latest news and Health & Wellness stories from Loma Linda University Health at news.llu.edu.
Can leftovers be miracles? Ellen White assures us that “the gift brought to Him with thanksgiving and with prayer for His blessing, He will multiply as He multiplied the food given to the sons of the prophets [by Elisha] and to the weary multitude [by Jesus]” (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 243). The Discovery Life Church (DLC) in Sonora, Calif., helped families with gently used clothing at a God’s Closet event on August 11 and saw miraculous leftovers as a result.

Now to be held annually every April and August, God’s Closet began as a seed of an idea when Debbie Nord, current organizer and leader, read an article in the *Pacific Union Recorder* in 2016 and finally admitted to herself she could no longer ignore the pulling of her heart to start something like this for the community.

 She then contacted Meryl Tshoepe, who had been mentioned in the article for launching the ministry in Spokane, Wash., and Redding, Calif. Months into the planning, Nord efficiently worked with a team of more than 80 volunteers from both the church and community to sort and prepare donated children’s clothing.

Many more helpers welcomed families at the school/church gym and helped them “shop” for much-needed children’s clothing, which were especially welcomed at the start of the school year. At least 450 people or 150 families from the community attended the event in August.

Appreciating the team, Nord commented, “It was heart-warming to watch the volunteers cheerfully working and chatting as they beautifully organized the tables.”
It takes a lot of effort to organize volunteers, but it is well worth it. Helping others to serve has immeasurable benefits. It is also very important to her that assignments are made in such a way that volunteers will want to continue serving again. One of the volunteers told her that the provided meals made her feel extra special and appreciated.

Nine-year-old Jackson Vymeister handed out three plastic bags to each shopper at the registration table. As he described it, “It was bzy [sic], but I loved my job.” One of the volunteers, Verdia Williams, heard a five-year-old boy ask his father as they were walking toward the exit, “Why didn’t we pay for our clothes?” The father was able to say, “We did. We paid one dollar at registration.”

Tables were set up with clothing and shoes neatly sorted by size and gender. Adventist Health Sonora provided diapers and children’s underwear. Students at Mother Lode Adventist Junior Academy collected lots of new socks and also helped to bring in the boxes of clothes. The book table was a popular spot, and many children chose a Bible. In addition, the Child Care Center watched about 40 children so that parents could shop more easily.

During checkout and while walking with people to their cars, volunteers were able to hear gratitude and appreciation—and many were so thankful. One mother with two school-aged children described to Jean McMurray, who served as a line greeter in the parking lot, “Why didn’t we pay for our clothes?” The father was able to say, “We did. We paid one dollar at registration.”

At checkout, each family received either a mug as a first-time guest or a little bag that included handmade soap made by Renee Mathe. Fliers about other church events were available, and participants could also take the book Steps to Jesus. At registration, they could indicate if they wanted Bible studies and information about church programming.

As a result, at least two volunteers, Cathie Swartz and Connie Allen, are now arranging to give Bible studies. Becky Renner, in charge of Discipleship Ministries at DLC, summed up the day by saying, “I love helping with God’s Closet. It is probably my favorite event of the year. I have had the wonderful experience of talking with those who come and then seeing them at church. Jesus reached people by meeting their needs, and God’s Closet gives our church the opportunity to do the same thing.”

God’s Closet has now expanded throughout the Pacific Union Conference and around the North American Division. If you are interested, the Sonora church will hold their next giveaway on April 26, 2020. It would be wonderful if this article, like the one in 2016, inspires others to see how God continues to make miraculous leftovers that bless others.

A video was created by Susanne Vhymeister to tell the miraculous story of her friendship with a previously homeless mother, Jessica, as a result of attending this and a previous God’s Closet. See it at: http://vyh.co/GodsCloset2019.
Putting God first in study and action, serving the community in action and love, working and serving the church as a body of Christ* is the mission of the Merced Bethel church. To carry out this goal, the church’s slogan is “Reflecting Christ in the community.”

The Merced Bethel church, located in the Central Valley of California, has a membership of 120, with regular Sabbath attendance at approximately 40 to 50 people. Having been the recipient of back-to-back clean audits in 2017 and 2018, and having very generous members, the church could give the impression that it is comfortable financially. However, it resides in an extremely impoverished area.

As the members believe strongly in God’s mission of reaching and loving others, leadership encourages them to use their strength and hands to reach out to those who have been written off as unreachable.

For 18 and a half years, members have offered a breakfast ministry to the homeless every Sunday morning, regardless of the weather. Bea and Jerry Lewis, Matt Johnson, and Cleofas Briones, with the help of many volunteers, have faithfully prepared and served more than 133,500 meals. Additionally, Briones has begun serving burritos on the last Sunday of every month at Steven Leonard Park as an extension of the city’s homeless program.

Before this ministry began, Bea Lewis happened to be standing in front of the church one chilly winter morning in 2000, when a homeless man approached her to ask for socks. She didn’t have any, so the man headed toward the National Guard Armory, where homeless persons are accommodated from 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. during the winter season. This incident tugged at her heart. She asked herself, “How can I be standing in front of the church doing nothing when I could do something for these homeless?” So she decided to buy coffee and chocolate, which she and Tammie Owens served the next morning.

At first, the homeless were hesitant to come and participate in the Sunday breakfasts. However, those that did come took food back with them for those who remained at the armory, and more were served.

Bea and Jerry Lewis then assumed leadership of the homeless ministry by preparing menus and buying needed items for Sunday’s breakfasts. God touched the hearts of many people, and others became involved. Agencies donated equipment, and others donated supplies and materials to the program. As the program expanded, the homeless received gift bags of items for the cold winters at Christmastime.

Then in 2008, spiritual food was added to the “menu” with Bible studies, which are ongoing. An estimated 4,000 people have attended these Bible studies over 11 years. Elder Charlie Crandall provides studies from 7 to 8 a.m. prior to the Sunday breakfasts. A highlight of the studies has been a complete and detailed lesson on the book of Revelation. In 2018, Elder Chris Poulin joined the Bible study group as an alternate teacher.

The breakfast ministry has brought change to the lives of the nearby homeless. Many of them are no longer homeless, yet they still come to the Bible study. Some have been baptized, and others are now attending Sabbath services.

One may ask, “What makes this program unique from other feeding programs?” There are several factors. People are spiritually and physically fed. The church believes the Word of God helps changes lives for the best. In addition, Sunday’s Bible study group manifests attitudes of reverence and respect to all.

Working with other local agencies, another Merced ministry that is making a difference is Community Services, which has helped more than 12,000 people in the past 10 years. Providing for the poor and needy, the ministry gives 5 to 10 weekly baskets, depending on the size and needs of the families. This ministry also provides turkey and food baskets to families during the Thanksgiving season.

Still another ministry of the church is the GLOW Festival at the end of each October. Children and families of the
Youth Tent at Soquel Camp Meeting
Addresses the Battle Within

By Janet Abbey

The Soquel Youth Tent camp meeting 2019 experience was counted a spiritual success this year by leaders, who reported an atmosphere that encouraged frank and candid conversations. This allowed the youth to obtain new information, gain clarity, and receive a deeper understanding of the topics presented. The theme was the “Battle Within,” and it focused on real-life issues about serious topics that youth face today, such as sexuality, pornography, depression, and anxiety. Collectively, the youth asked many questions, which helped a number of them find freedom from the yoke of the enemy—and hope, healing, and victory in Jesus.

By the end of camp meeting, three young people were baptized, while 16 others said they would like to be baptized in their home churches. Additionally, 26 youth stated that they wished to stay connected after camp meeting with small groups or Bible studies. Eight young people wished to be contacted after camp meeting for help with personal struggles. Leaders are currently working on putting together follow-up teams.

By the end of camp meeting, a group of teens were overheard saying, “Camp meeting was different this year. We are going home with nothing to feel ashamed about.”

“The Youth Tent leadership team, praises God for this victory,” a youth leader said. “We’re overjoyed that the enemy lost his power over these teens at camp meeting this year. As they look up, they are now beginning to understand their value as children of God!”
Unity in Mission is Central
at 65th Constituency Session

BY ARAYA MOSS

On September 22, 917 delegates convened at the White Memorial church for the 65th constituency session of the Southern California Conference (SCC). The theme of the session was “Exalting Christ,” a theme chosen to reflect the core of SCC’s new mission statement.

The session began with meaningful time spent in worship. Attendees were blessed by music from 151 students from Glendale Adventist Academy, Newbury Park Academy, San Fernando Academy, and San Gabriel Academy, who formed a mass choir—the largest at a constituency session in SCC history. NAD President Dan Jackson gave an inspirational devotional focusing on our shared faith and mission. The worship service concluded with a season of prayer.

Once quorum was declared, the business portion of the session began. The General Conference Auditing Service presented details of the 2015-2018 audit report. SCC has received an unqualified opinion, the highest opinion given, which means that the conference has earned a clean audit.

“We can continue this work in treasury by implementing technologies that allow us to do more without having to increase expenses of the conference,” said Orville Ortiz, SCC treasurer, “thus maximizing the dollars that are saved for evangelism and other ministry endeavors.”

Prior to the session, delegates had received reports from the officers, departments, and nominating and bylaws committees. During the weeks leading up to the session, every member—regular and at-large delegates and even non-delegates—had an opportunity to attend town hall meetings to voice concerns or ask questions regarding these reports.

Dakota White, a first-time delegate from All Nations church, was unsure of what to expect walking into the session that morning but left with hope for the future. “I found so much comfort in seeing the many church members represented at the session; it’s a great reminder that we are all in this together,” said White. “Voices were heard, concerns were noted, and all had the opportunity to speak to what we believe will help us move forward more united.”

At the session, the combined officers’ video report emphasized SCC’s diverse community and highlighted the innovative ways this conference has embraced its
community in Christ. A second video explaining SCC’s mission, vision, and values was also shown.

Delegates voted to approve the proposed changes to the conference bylaws, including three significant changes:

• Extend the interval between constituency sessions from four years to five.
• Change the formula for regular delegates: Each church is allowed a minimum of one regular delegate, plus one additional delegate for each 75 members (previously 50 members).
• A change in title from superintendent of education to vice president for education, with the position to be considered an administrative officer.

Following the nominating committee report, all five conference officers were re-elected for the next quinquennium: Velino A. Salazar, president; John H. Cress, executive secretary; Orville Ortiz, treasurer; James G. Lee, executive vice president; and Harold A. Crook, vice president for education.

Cress and Ortiz, who were both hired after the 2015 constituency session, were voted by delegates for the first time. “My heart is filled with gratitude for being given the trust of the Southern California Conference constituents,” said Cress. “I certainly do not have the ‘right’ to serve as executive secretary. It is a humble honor to have this opportunity to continue as a servant leader.”

Crook, who was re-elected with an elevated position per the accepted bylaws changes, is looking forward to developing new strategies for church subsidies and alternative funding for affordable Christian education. “I would like to thank you for the confidence that you have placed in me as your vice president for education, as well as all the principals, teachers, and school staff for their dedicated work in bringing our students to Jesus,” said Crook. “It is truly a privilege to work alongside the Christian educators, pastors, boards, parents, and students of the Southern California Conference.”

In addition to the executive officers, delegates also elected members of both the conference executive and bylaws committees for the next term. (See sidebar.)

“Leadership is not a right—it is a privilege,” said Salazar. “In the church, we consider this an invitation from God, and our commitment is with God to serve His people.”

Elected officers are pictured with their spouses following a prayer of dedication by the SCC prayer and spirituality team.

Delegates exercise their voice through electronic votes.
For years, through Pastor John Jenson’s leadership, South Bay church has been instrumental in providing its community and members with practical tools and knowledge to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Passionate about this mission, lay members work together to plan numerous health events throughout the year: health lectures and seminars, plant-based cooking schools, discussions on nutrition and spirituality, and more.

People from the South Bay and beyond flock to South Bay church. One such visitor is Culver City resident Diana Ryan, who discovered these events in the summer of 2018 by searching online for whole-food, plant-based (WFPB) events.

“I’ve been eating a whole-food, plant-based diet since March 2017,” said Ryan. “It is so encouraging to be in a room full of people who are trying it and find benefits in it! I’ve brought a few friends, and one of them has switched to a WFPB diet after attending just one evening lecture.”

South Bay church hosts The Best of Nature Health Classes, which take place January-September, every third Saturday of the month. In August, Steve Lawenda, M.D., presented a health lecture entitled “The Magical Buffet.” The meaning of a magical buffet is that there is a way of eating, namely a WFPB diet, in which a person could eat until full, without counting calories or restricting portion size, to reverse chronic diseases and even lose weight.

“You don’t see this advertised on TV,” Lawenda said during his lecture, “because there’s no money in it.”

He shared stories of how a WFPB diet impacted the lives of many of his patients who dealt with type 1 and 2 diabetes, heart disease, angina, high cholesterol and blood pressure, and many other diseases. Toward the end, he shared two personal stories with attendees: Patient A was a heart attack and coronary artery bypass surgery survivor, who later underwent bilateral leg amputations below the knees as a result of his type 2 diabetes and subsequently fell into a deep depression. Patient B was obese and pre-diabetic and had fatty liver, acid reflux, and symptoms of sleep apnea.

As Lawenda concluded, he revealed that Patient A was his father, who unfortunately did not live to experience the benefits of a WFPB diet. Patient B was Lawenda himself, who, after changing his diet and seeing the positive results, was moved to implement this transformative knowledge with his patients.

Following the health lecture, Susan Jenson, Plant-Based Certified R.D., presented a cooking demonstration. She showed attendees how to prepare a sushi salad, taco soup, and chocolate-peanut butter cookies, all using WFPB ingredients. Everyone in attendance sampled the food afterward and received recipes to make these dishes at home.

“Pastor John keeps a nice balance between hospitality, health information, encouragement, and Bible teaching,” added Ryan. “It doesn’t have to be complicated or expensive, but it will require some focused attention until it becomes second nature.”

(Left) Attendees have an opportunity to taste the different foods prepared during the cooking demonstration as they fellowship with one another. (Right) Lawenda concludes his lecture with a personal testimony, encouraging the crowd, “Now that you have this information, do something with it!”
The Place Adventist Fellowship company, a multi-generational congregation in Newbury Park, was officially recognized as a church of the Southern California Conference (SCC) with a special celebration service on August 24.

The Place started as a group from Thousand Oaks church, created to have an alternative, contemporary worship style for youth. Simon Liversidge, senior pastor at The Place for the past 16 years, explained that its foundation is threefold: “A place for young people to be the church, not the future of the church; a place to worship in a different style; and a safe place for people from different communities who have been hurt in the past.”

Greg Hoenes, SCC West Region director, opened the celebration with prayer, acknowledging how God has led and grown The Place.

Ron Fausset, longtime member of The Place and current treasurer, shared the congregation’s history and recognition of its founders, recalling how during the early years, members experienced leadership issues and financial strain, almost shutting down completely. However, “God’s work was moving forward,” said Fausset.

During the ceremony, Alejandro Martinez, youth pastor at The Place, explained their mission to be a place for all and their vision to belong, believe, and become. “We are not a church of perfect people,” said Martinez, “but we strive for authenticity.”

“We are here today to recommit our lives to Christ and to confirm our mission,” said Velino A. Salazar, SCC president, in his challenge to the church. “This church belongs to Jesus Christ.”

James G. Lee, SCC vice president, gave a prayer of dedication over the leadership and members. John H. Cress, SCC executive secretary, presented a certificate of church status, saying, “This is not a peak but another stepping stone.”

Orville Ortiz, SCC treasurer/CFO, presented the church with a $5,000 check for evangelism, while explaining how the name “The Place,” which had been chosen on a whim, is significant. The phrase the place is mentioned in the Bible 188 times, beginning with Abraham in Genesis and ending in Revelation, each time designating places of worship, provision, battle, fellowship, or conversation—places of importance, chosen by God. Therefore, “The Place” is a more meaningful name than previously thought.

In his response, Liversidge spoke about The Place’s first mission trip to Peru. Volunteers were deep in manual labor amidst high temperatures, when he noticed one member in a pink construction hat sitting down. He asked her what she was doing and she responded, “My job is to sit here and pray for the rain to come.” Although rain didn’t fall, Liversidge noticed that the days felt slightly cooler after, concluding that “there is a place for everyone at The Place.”

Concluding the service, Liversidge asked if anyone in attendance would like to be the first new member of The Place Adventist Fellowship church; two people immediately volunteered, which would bring total membership to 422.

“We are in it together!” Liversidge excitedly said. In closing, he simply gave all thanks and glory to God. “You have made this a special place. Thank You for being the reason we gather.”
Baking bread on a stick, reading a compass, lighting a campfire: Northern California Conference Pathfinders practiced these camping skills and many more at the NCC Invitational Camporee. About 180 Pathfinders from 13 clubs came together for intense fun and learning at Redwood Area Camp, Oct. 3-6.

NCC Youth Director Eddie Heinrich asked Chris Miller, director of the Fortuna Pathfinders for more than 37 years, to organize the camporee’s activities. He arranged for instructors to teach the four Camping Skills honors, and the kids enthusiastically participated in a number of camping-related activities. In addition, the Pathfinders were able to complete 80 to 90 percent of their classwork (Friend, Companion, etc.) for this Pathfinder year. They also worked on a number of required honors, such as Friendship, Knot Tying, Birds, and more.

About 25 members of local area churches served as volunteer instructors. “I wanted the Pathfinder staff to be free to go around with their clubs and help the kids,” said Miller.

The teen Pathfinders participated in a separate program, working on the Orienteering and Canoeing honors. The kids were surprised to discover that they would be cooking for themselves. They were divided into small groups, and each group was shown a table covered with ingredients from which to choose. They had to make menus for the entire weekend from those ingredients.

One highlight of the camporee was the junior Pathfinder Sabbath potluck. Each Camping Skill honor has a different cooking requirement—baking bread on a stick; boiling, frying, and baking; a one-pot meal; and baking in a reflector oven—so there was a wide variety of dishes. “The potluck was amazing, with really good food,” said Miller.

Club directors appreciated the many items the Pathfinders completed on their classwork to-do lists. “Doing the classwork requirements with other Pathfinders their age made it more enjoyable for the kids and easier to accomplish, and now our club can focus on other honors and fun activities during the rest of the Pathfinder year,” said RoseAnn Dalmas, director of the Napa Valley Pathfinders.

During the camporee, second-year Pathfinder Haydee Candelaria learned how to put up a tent and build a fire, and she also earned several honors, including Cacti. “My favorite parts of camporee were getting to meet new people and doing the honors,” said Candelaria, who is a member of Dalmas’s club.

Despite the work involved, Miller was happy to help the club members get the skills they need, while having fun in nature and learning more about God. He appreciates all the people who participated, and he’s grateful to his wife, Debbie, for her never-ending support. “Pathfinders is my ministry to these kids,” he said.
An Instagram account changed the trajectory of Laura Valdez’s life.

At the beginning of last school year, high school senior Valdez felt unhappy and unfulfilled. “I was going through so much personally and mentally,” she said. “I just felt like I didn’t have as much faith as I did before. I didn’t feel God was there.”

As she was scrolling through her Instagram feed, she noticed that PVYouth (pv.youth) had started following her. PVYouth is the Placerville church’s youth group, led by Leif Cano, youth pastor. “As I was looking at their pictures, I saw something in them that was so different,” said Valdez. “On their bio they talked about how they engage with God.”

PVYouth features all three aspects of their ministry on Instagram: PVHuddles (Sabbath School), PVCares (once a month outreach activities), and PVHangs (social events). The account shows teens leading worship and studying the Bible. There are photos of them handing out blankets to the homeless, praying with community members, and visiting a care home. In addition, they’re playing volleyball and wakeboarding.

Valdez sent a message through Instagram, asking how she could join the group and wondering if she needed to fill out an application. Cano responded that the group met on Saturday mornings and she was welcome to come. Valdez didn’t go right away, but then Cano messaged her to say that the group was planning to attend a youth conference in Sacramento, and he had an extra ticket because someone had canceled. “I had this feeling in me that I should go,” she said.

First, she had to get permission. “I thought it would be hard to convince my parents because they didn’t know anybody,” she said. After some discussion, her parents allowed her to go to the conference, and the PVYouth group welcomed her with open arms. “She felt that we’re just one big family,” said Cano.

Cano and his wife, Kenia, wanted to reassure Laura’s parents that PVYouth was a safe place. “We talked to her parents and got to know them,” said Cano. “They said she had never been involved in something like this before. Laura had been telling them that she loved the Christian environment.” With her parents’ permission, “she came faithfully to our group every Saturday and invited her best friend from public school and her sister,” said Cano.

This summer Valdez was one of 17 teens from PVYouth who went to Texas to attend a conference and camp with teens from the Arlington church, where Cano’s brother, Danny, is the youth pastor. During the trip, 13 Placerville youth members made decisions for baptism, and 10 of them were baptized in Texas—including Laura. “Being in this environment with the youth group changed my life,” she said.

As she was considering what to do following high school, Valdez expected to apply to a public university. Cano arranged for her to visit Pacific Union College, and she received a scholarship to study nursing. In September, she began her first quarter—the first one in her family to go to college. “It’s stressful, but I love it!” she said. “I feel like I couldn’t have picked a better campus.” She is also happy to be walking with the Lord. “Because of Him, I got through everything,” she said.
NCC Confirms Holy Spirit’s Call
to Three Pastors

BY JULIE LORENZ

This summer, the Northern California Conference ordained three pastors to the gospel ministry, confirming the calling of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Three more were ordained in the fall, and their stories will be featured in the next issue.

Steven Brownell – Pastor, Hayfork/Weaverville Trinity Lakes/Whitmore district

On Sabbath, June 8, Steven Brownell was ordained at the Redding church. He celebrated the Lord’s leading with his wife, Frankie, and their family. “To be here this evening with four God-fearing children and their spouses, 12 God-pursuing grandchildren, as well as loving family and friends, is praise only to God,” he said.

Brownell was born in Stockton to parents who weren’t practicing Christians. When he was a young boy, his mother began taking him and his brother to the local Adventist church. At age seven, he and his brother walked to an evangelistic series in Manteca, where they lived, and committed their lives to Jesus. They were baptized six years later, but none of their family attended the service.

After graduating from Modesto Union Academy, Brownell had a variety of work experiences—serving in the army, helping troubled youth, supervising students at an ADRA warehouse, and working at Pacific Union College. While at the college, the Brownells examined their faith in a deeper way. They began to travel, sharing their newfound faith in God with friends and strangers.

After several years, the family returned to California. For five years, they owned and operated a care home for the elderly in Waterford, and then they moved to Weimar Institute. Over 11 years, Brownell served in a number of positions: academy boys’ dean; Bible, drivers’ training, and auto shop teacher; principal; and exercise therapist for the NEWSTART program. The Brownells then moved to Maine, where he pastored a four-church district for 12 years.

In 2014, the NCC called Brownell to his current district. In addition to pastoring, he is studying to finish his Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry from the Theological Seminary at Andrews University. “Working together, we meet life’s many challenges, including that of ministering in the Emerald Triangle,” he said. “We go forward in faith, much prayer, and dependence on an all-sufficient God.”

Garrett Anderson – Pastor, Pittsburg/Oakland Immanuel Temple district

On Sabbath afternoon, June 22, Garrett Anderson was ordained during Urban Camp Meeting at Christian Life Center in Stockton—with his wife, Danyetta, by his side. The Andersons’ two young children, Anala Ariel and Gabriel Benjamin, were present as their father received the confirmation of his calling.

Born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Anderson graduated from Pine Forge Academy. He then went on to earn a bachelor’s degree in political science from Hampton University in Virginia and a Juris Doctor from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He held positions with a community justice project, a district attorney’s office, and in chambers of the District Court and Superior Courts of Pennsylvania.

During his undergraduate days,
Anderson felt the Lord leading him to the ministry. “I resisted the call to pastoral ministry in favor of law as an alternate avenue to fulfill the call,” he said. “After eight years, though, I knew I would never have complete peace in my spirit until I surrendered my agenda for God’s.”

Anderson enrolled at the HMS Richards Divinity School at La Sierra University. He earned a Master of Theological Studies in 2013 and a Master of Divinity in 2015. The NCC called him in 2013 to serve as assistant pastor at the Oakland Market Street church, and in 2017 he began serving in his current district.

Anderson has recently undertaken the work of assisting undocumented immigrants seeking asylum as well as immigrants pursuing other avenues of immigration into the United States.

His education in political science, law, and theology, as well as his professional experience, provide a broad foundation for his pursuits of ministry, social justice, and advocacy. “The most rewarding part of ministry for me is empowering and equipping God’s children in pursuit of their God-given potential and affirming their giftedness,” he said. “It is also extremely rewarding to advocate for mercy on behalf of those most in need.”

Jesse Malin – Associate Pastor, Lodi Fairmont church

On Sabbath afternoon, Aug. 31, Jesse Malin was ordained at the Fairmont church. Numerous family members participated in the program, including his wife, Hailey. The Malins’ young son, Charlie, watched the service with great interest.

Raised in South Lancaster, Massachusetts, Malin graduated from South Lancaster Academy before attending Southern Adventist University. After a mentor encouraged him to work at summer camp, he worked for four years at Camp Winnekeag in Massachusetts. “My time at camp grew my heart for youth and young adult ministry,” he said.

During his college years, Malin served as a student missionary teaching on Ebeye in the Marshall Islands. As he was doubting his purpose there, Malin heard God speak to him: “You are not alone. I have called you here not so you can teach, but so I can teach.”

Malin graduated from Southern Adventist University with a bachelor’s degree in religious studies and a minor in outdoor education. He then earned a Master of Arts in Youth and Young Adult Ministry from the Theological Seminary at Andrews University.

After seminary, the Malins accepted a call to be missionaries to Palau. He was the elementary school’s vice principal and later the principal, while she served as a teacher. Mentoring the student missionaries was a highlight of their work. Two years later, they returned to Tennessee, where he served as a Bible worker focusing on youth in the Lawrenceburg church. After NCC Youth Director Eddie Heinrich talked with him at the 2014 International Camporee, Malin received a call to the Fairmont church.

In January 2015, he began working with youth at his church and helping to plan activities throughout the conference. “I strongly believe that young people need a diverse group of individuals that invite them to come as they are and be loved, while introducing them to the living Christ by sharing in their experience of walking with Him,” he said.
Youth Rush Missionaries
in the Nevada-Utah Territory

By Joseph Cadiz

This summer, young people from across the country gathered together in the Nevada-Utah Conference to commit ten weeks of missionary work to God. While mission trips are sometimes perceived as exclusively happening in far-flung lands and distant continents, there are territories much closer to home that are equally in need of the gospel. There is a mission field just next door.

Youth Rush is a ten-week work-study program that focuses on reaching this largely unreached but familiar territory by personally visiting homes. Though this method may seem antiquated to many, speaking to people individually, door-to-door, is seen by political campaigns as the most effective means in spreading and promoting a given message.

Over 50 Adventist youth, ages 15 to 28 years old, came to Salt Lake City, Utah, and the Nevada cities of Las Vegas and Reno to participate in this soul-reaching effort. These young people came from many different places and backgrounds. Some are students in local conference academies; others are attending Adventist universities.

“There is no greater satisfaction in life than allowing yourself to be used by God,” said Evelyn Roman, a nursing student attending Southern Adventist University. “I really can’t think of a better way to spend my summer.” Evelyn was part of the Las Vegas program, which personally delivered over 8,000 books to families searching for the truth.

Apart from the large cities of Las Vegas, Reno, and Salt Lake City, the Youth Rush participants were also able to visit smaller areas where door-to-door efforts are not as common. “We visited Susanville, Quincy, Portola, and Chester in Northern California, along with Elko in Northern Nevada. We also went door-to-door in the smaller Utah cities of Vernal, Price, Ogden, St. George, Hurricane, and Cedar City,” explained Cristel Escobar, a member of the Salt Lake City-Reno Youth Rush program.

In total, over 20,000 copies of Steps to Christ, The Great Controversy, Christ’s Object Lessons, and other books were sown as seed for the everlasting gospel in a dozen cities across the Nevada-Utah Conference. In addition to the books planted in many homes, each student came away with resolute faith in God and a stronger sense of a mission field that is nearer than previously thought—maybe even just next door.

“Youth Rush changed my life,” Escobar said. “I’ve learned that being a missionary isn’t about going to a faraway place; it means spreading the message wherever I am, all the time.” Roman added, “If you’re a young person looking for purpose and mission, especially during the summer, I can’t think of a better way to get to know God and share the good news of His soon coming!”
Press Together Juicery

Connects to Local and Digital Community

By Faith Hoyt

Since their grand opening on May 12 of this year, Press Together, a cold-pressed juicery owned by the Adventist Church and operated in Ogden, Utah, has steadily increased connections to both the local community and the digital one.

Husband and wife duo Abel and Jazmin Alvarado manage the daily operations of the juicery. Every month they choose a local organization that is working to benefit the community, and they collect donations for them. Earlier this year, tips and donations went to Deamude Adventist Christian School (the local Adventist elementary), and Lantern House (a homeless shelter and soup kitchen operated in Ogden). In coming months, donations will support organizations like Family Promise and Habitat for Humanity, two volunteer organizations working to address family homelessness, build homes, and improve lives.

“We’re excited to partner up with local nonprofit organizations, and it is building our connection with the community,” Jazmin said.

In addition to connecting with the local community through the support of charitable work, Press Together’s social media following has provided a way to connect digitally to residents in Ogden and beyond. Every week on Instagram, Abel and Jazmin Alvarado share about Press Together with over 1,400 followers. “We want to let people know how juicing can help people live a healthier lifestyle,” Jazmin says.

From videos of how they make their cold-pressed juices, to photos of their detox products, to sharing about the mission of Press Together, they are using this social media platform to give the digital community a behind-the-scenes look at a juicery that wants to make a difference.

“We’re promoting health through juices that are all-natural and organic,” Abel shared. “We’re also all about developing relationships and positively impacting this community.”

You can support the innovative ministry of Press Together through your prayers and by sharing their social media posts. Learn more and get involved at: presstogether.com.
Holbrook Indian School

A Seventh-day Adventist Boarding Academy Serving Native American Youth Since 1946

Students hike in the Rocky Mountains.
The last specks of light faded from the sky. Flames crackled, and shadows danced across the faces around the campfire. Crickets commenced their nighttime symphony as Mr. Hubbard, our math teacher, began to read.

Outdoor School in Rocky Mountain National Park was a fantastic experience for the 8th-through 12th-grade students of Holbrook Indian School (HIS). The students began to plan the event months before. They researched trip routes, local weather, and activities to do in the park. They shaped the curriculum by suggesting classes they were interested in taking. This year, the focus of the week was Reach Higher. All the lessons, devotionals, and activities were designed to help the students understand that goal.

Park rangers taught Aquatic Ecology, while school faculty and staff taught Fire Science, Glacier Science, and Edible Plants. The students got to go on scenic hikes in the mountains and participate in a scavenger hunt at Bear Lake. Everyone enjoyed searching the creek for water boatmen, dragonfly nymphs, and giant water bugs.
Arts and culture were not left out. Students had the opportunity to polish their photography skills, practice watercolor painting, go bird watching, and learn more about native lore.

Most of our students come from the local Native reservation. At HIS, we emphasize the idea of “breaking the cycle.” Often this means showing the students life beyond the reservation. Outdoor School allows them to see new places, meet new people, learn new skills, and break out of their comfort zone. Learning in the outdoors has also been proven to increase motivation to learn, decrease stress levels, and improve overall health.

“It brings us closer together as one big family,” said Adrianna, a senior. “To be out there, to just breathe and to see the breathtaking views, was just amazing, and it taught me that [God] is always with us, whether it’s through good or tough situations.”

Reach Higher was a fitting theme since Outdoor School took place at an altitude between 8,000 and 12,000 feet. Surrounded by the majestic Rocky Mountains, our hearts and minds were lifted towards Christ.

“I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14, NIV). At HIS, Reach Higher is a value we weave into every lesson and conversation we...
Holbrook Indian School (HIS) is a first- through twelfth-grade boarding academy operated by the Pacific Union Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. HIS also manages a first- through eighth-grade day school on the Navajo reservation in Chinle, Arizona. Eighty percent of funding comes from individuals who have a desire to support Native American ministries and Christian education. Your generosity makes a difference in the lives of our students, their families, and the communities they serve. Thank you for your support.
La Sierra University’s Summer Bridge Paves Pathways into Careers

Mexicali student grateful for God’s providential leading to college.

BY DARLA MARTIN TUCKER

Eugenio Patricio Bernal, who goes by Patricio, is from Mexicali, Mexico, and is a first-year pre-orthotics and prosthetics major at La Sierra University in Riverside, Calif. It was a career path that almost didn’t happen. But providential doors opened at just the right time, including a last-minute acceptance into an intensive La Sierra math tutoring and college prep program called Summer Bridge. It was developed with funding from a five-year, $2.6 million Title V grant awarded in 2015 from the U.S. Department of Education.

Bernal graduated from Calexico Mission School, a K-12 Adventist school located along the U.S.-Mexico border. To manage costs, he first considered community college as well as taking a year off to work and save money. But his first interest was La Sierra, from which his older brother, Luis Bernal, graduated last June. He applied and was accepted, and through the resourceful research of his mother, along with a fortuitous summer camp tuition-matching job, the financing was in place. He was all set. Then his score on a college math placement test proved too low for him to take required freshman courses.

The university offers Summer Bridge as a solution for students in Bernal’s predicament. It provides eligible freshmen five weeks of no-cost, holistic instruction in a supportive environment that builds academic skills and provides an opportunity to re-take the math placement test called Accuplacer. Bernal became aware of Summer Bridge just days before its application period closed last summer. He rushed to submit the required documents and a few days later received an acceptance notification.

During the immersive program, Bernal stayed in a La Sierra college dorm and focused on the boot-camp style daily math classes. He loved his instructors and learned how to study, he said. “I have a bad time memorizing, but Summer Bridge helped me do that.”

After the five-week course, he scored two levels higher on the Accuplacer test and was accepted into a university statistics class. The experience impacted Bernal on an even deeper level. “Summer Bridge helped me to understand that I should start believing in myself more,” he said.

After two years at La Sierra, Bernal plans to continue two and a half years at Loma Linda University to ultimately earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees. He gained an interest in orthotics and prosthetics after participating a year ago in a Gateway program and career shadowing opportunity at LLU.

“Now when I look back, there was a plan for me,” Bernal said. “I feel like God had a plan for me to be here.”

The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities categorizes La Sierra as one of more than 100 private Hispanic-serving institutions of higher education across the United States. The Title V grant awarded to La Sierra University is intended to help Hispanic and low-income students achieve greater academic success leading to graduation. The initial Summer Bridge program has resulted in substantive improvements in Accuplacer scores for almost all of its students. Results for 2018 showed that of 24 students, 19 tested into a categorically more advanced math course. Following Summer Bridge 2019, 13 out of 15 students moved up one or more math classes.

Said Marvin Payne, La Sierra’s project director of the Title V program, “Our Title V funding is pivotal in making it possible for us to design and execute an effective Summer Bridge program that integrates at-risk incoming students into college life and accelerates their path to college level courses. This will make a real long-term difference in their careers.”
Church Support Services Expands Ministry Resources

By Faith Hoyt

As Church Support Services Director Rich DuBose will tell you, his department is eager to help fulfill the mission of sharing the gospel. Formed to serve the needs of churches, his department has provided a host of resources to help churches share the gospel in the Pacific Union Conference territory.

DuBose joined the Pacific Union Conference as an associate director in the Church Ministries department in 1994. “Back then, we launched a new ministry help-desk called PlusLine,” he said. “We had an 800 number that local church leaders could call to help them find ministry-related tools and resources, and we handled event registrations. Toward the end, our staff answered as many as 100 calls a day.”

Soon, other unions were included in the service. Today, PlusLine, now known as AdventSource, is owned by the North American Division (NAD) and operates in Lincoln, Nebraska.

With the acquisition of PlusLine by the NAD in 2005, the nature of DuBose’s work transitioned to developing resources that could be used in local church ministry. “Our mission is to develop and share curated content that inspires pastors, church leaders, and members to use their best gifts to connect people with Jesus,” DuBose said. “Our goal is to find and share knowledge and stimulate engagement that can help turn theology into biography.”

Over the years, Church Support Services has conducted seminars for ministry training; developed online study guides; created sharing cards and flyers on healthful living and other topics; and produced web ads and various theme-based websites for preaching, Bible study, and more.

Several recent projects include the creation of a smartphone app called SpiritRenew and an initiative called inSpire that celebrates and promotes using the arts in ministry. In addition, they’ve produced over 75 videos ranging from six to eight minutes in length that focus on specific ministries and individuals that God is using throughout the Pacific Union territory—a project called Stories of Faith.

“The inSpire TV show features Adventist creatives within the Pacific Union Conference who desire to bring good to life and to use their gifts to share God’s story,” says Rich DuBose, director of Church Support Services. “Art, film, graphics, music, and more are being used as a vehicle for sharing God’s message of healing and hope.” Left to right: Greg Evans, singer/songwriter; inSpire co-host, Jesús Noland, app and game developer; Cecia Garcia Lopez, music therapist; and Rich DuBose, inSpire host.

By far our most comprehensive website is Answers For Me,” DuBose said. “It provides content for people who may or may not be Christian-oriented. It has resources for users who wish to grow spiritually, but it is intentionally low-key in its approach.”

DuBose helps local churches use RSS technology to feature his department’s content, such as stories and recipes, on their church websites without diverting traffic away from their sites.

“It takes a village of ideas and efforts to help create a culture for change and experimentation,” DuBose said. “We focus on sharing traditional and innovative ideas that churches can experiment with to fulfill our shared mission.”

To learn more about the resources produced by Church Support Services, visit www.churchsupportservices.org.
Native American Camp Meeting

By Nancy Crosby

November is Native American Heritage month. The Pacific Union is home to more than 1.2 million Native Americans. Much of the Navajo Nation lies within the Pacific Union.

One of the highlights of the year is the Native American camp meeting. Nevada-Utah Conference held the annual Native Camp Meeting from September 6 to 8 in Kayenta, Arizona. The weather was beautiful for the event.

Dr. Winston Craig was the guest speaker for the camp meeting. Craig spoke on nutrition and diabetes prevention. On Sunday, volunteers prepared a delicious meal of Navajo tacos for lunch.

“Many people enjoyed the fellowship and time at camp meeting,” said Pastor James Crosby of Kayenta. “Everyone pitched in to make the camp meeting happen. Local community people even came to help set up the tent and attended some of the meetings.”

Pacific Union Native American Ministries Co-Hosts Dental Clinic for Community in Page, Arizona

By Anne Crosby

God’s love was recently demonstrated through a group of dedicated volunteers in Page, Arizona. The Page All Nations church hosted a free dental clinic Sept. 23-25, attracting over 200 people in need of care. During the three days the clinic was open, approximately $200,000 of free dental and dermatology services were provided. Patients expressed that they were overwhelmed by this gesture of love and service.

The idea for the clinic came from Dr. Calvin Kim, a dentist and church member living in Washington state. Kim contacted Pacific Union Native American...
Ministries Coordinator Nancy Crosby about hosting a dental clinic for the community in Page, and soon after that a planning team formed. Each member was eager to make the event a reality. “God led, and through a series of events and much prayer, each detail fell into place,” Crosby said.

On Sunday, Sept. 22, a mission group called F5 Challenge, together with volunteers from Build and Restore International, arrived ready and willing to help. The two groups comprised a total of 73 volunteers from across the United States and Canada who sacrificed time and money to serve.

During their stay in Page, part of the group—which included licensed contractors and painters—roofed the church building and parsonage and repainted the church exterior.

The rest of the volunteers set up a tent in the church parking lot and prepared to provide dental services starting at 9 a.m. Monday. The medical group grew beyond the initial seven dentists to include two medical doctors (one being a dermatologist), three massage therapists, and several nurses. The tent was packed with patients each day, and many patients needed multiple procedures. The dentists offered extractions, fillings, x-rays, and more. Additionally, patients received medical advice and screening, were offered counseling with the pastor, and could meet with the Bible worker. The event generated interest in church services, and approximately 40 requests were made for Bible studies.

On Tuesday, Sept. 24, Kim and another dentist gave a presentation on oral health and hygiene to 183 second graders at a local elementary school. Staff at the school said it was the best talk on oral health ever presented there.

Volunteers at the clinic observed that although the patients seemed nervous and distrustful at first, smiles began to break out as people left the tent with their needs met. One Navajo grandmother remarked, “This is some of the best dental care I have ever received. Not only did they do x-rays and clean my teeth, but they also filled three cavities and replaced a crown.” Another woman told a volunteer that she had been embarrassed about her teeth, but now she felt respected and was happy to...
learn better ways of maintaining oral hygiene. A young Navajo father said, “I have always been afraid of dentists. But these dentists are so kind.”

Many patients traveled from hours away to attend the dental clinic because of the scarcity of quality dental work on the reservation. Another obstacle is that the cost of dental services in Page is often too expensive for many local residents.

The Page All Nations church is grateful that they could fill this urgent need. “We hope that this event positively impacted this community and that residents saw God’s love through each volunteer,” Crosby said.

While volunteers helped at the dental clinic, additional volunteers with Build and Restore International worked on reroofing the Page All Nations church.

Maranatha Celebrates 50 Years of Mission Service

By Julie Z. Lee

On Sabbath morning, September 21, Don Noble stood before a crowd of more than 2,000 people in Sacramento, California, welcoming them to the 50th anniversary celebration of Maranatha Volunteers International. Behind him, a massive globe spun on a screen, showcasing the thousands of locations where Maranatha has completed a project. In total, Maranatha has built 11,229 structures and more than 1,000 water wells in 88 countries. The numbers are impressive, but they weren’t the focus of the weekend.

“The story of Maranatha is a fascinating story,” said Noble, president of Maranatha. “Each one of you probably has your own. It’s a fascinating story of people; it’s a story of miracles.”

These stories were at the heart of this year’s annual convention, which focused on Maranatha’s five decades of service. Established by a small group of friends in 1969, Maranatha has grown to be an international organization that has mobilized more than 85,000 volunteers on short-term mission trips to build churches, schools, and other urgently needed structures around the world. Many of these volunteers have returned with powerful stories of transformation, and several

Sixteen-year-old Shanti Slater, from Forbestown, California, spoke of her experience in Kenya on the Ultimate Workout, Maranatha’s project for teenagers. Shanti says she found God on the mission trip and was baptized. “One of the main things I learned about God is that He wants to come into everyone’s life.”

Continued from page 61
More than 2,000 people attended Maranatha Volunteers International’s annual convention, in Sacramento, California. This year, the program celebrated Maranatha’s 50th anniversary and focused on God’s leading in the mission organization.

Continued from page 62. Among the stories was the testimony of Laurelie Hillebert, a mother from Redding, California. Hillebert lost her daughter to illness but found new meaning in the tragedy while on a family mission trip to Zambia. Dominique Garcia, a college student from Houston, Texas, shared her challenge with an eating disorder and talked about how mission trips have helped to bring healing. Jack and Neoma Wisdom, from Paradise, California, told of their narrow escape from last year’s Camp Fire, where they lost everything but found grace and gratitude in God’s mercy.

The program also featured Adventist church leaders from countries around the world, including Cuba, Kenya, Peru, and India. They shared how Maranatha’s involvement changed the landscape of the Adventist church in their countries, including an increase in membership.

“Sin and the fall have brought a lot of inequalities in the economic life, social life, political life, and even the spiritual life [of Kenyans], and Maranatha came in to fill the gaps, and we are very grateful for that,” said Samuel Makori, president of the Adventist church in eastern Kenya. “God has seen the work in Kenya change tremendously ever since Maranatha came in 2016... We want to say, may the name of God be praised.”

Other events during the weekend included free seminars related to missions, a special anniversary dinner, and a Maranatha History Museum, which highlighted memorabilia and key moments in the organization’s history. Leading up to the convention, Maranatha also organized major renovation projects in August and September at three institutions in the Pacific Union: Pacific Union College, Rio Lindo Academy, and Leoni Meadows Christian Camp and Retreat Center. There are 24,000 Maranatha volunteers and supporters in the Pacific Union alone—more than half of...
Oak and Acorn Author Lectures at Los Angeles Adventist Forum

By Faith Hoyt

The Los Angeles chapter of the Adventist Forum hosted Oak and Acorn author Gilbert Valentine on the last Sabbath of September at the Glendale City church.

Valentine, a recently retired professor of leadership and administration in the School of Education at La Sierra University, is the author of five books, with more on the way. His book, *The Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage: Issues in the conflict for control of the Ellen G. White publications 1930-1939*, was re-published by Oak and Acorn Publishing in 2018.

At the forum, Valentine spoke about coming across correspondence between General Conference president Charles H. Watson and William C. White, Ellen White’s son, while researching another topic. The nature of their correspondence prompted him to delve deeply into the relationship between the White Estate and the General Conference—and ultimately led him to write his book.

The book follows the events that played out between the White Estate (then located at Elmshaven, in California) and the General Conference after Ellen White’s death in 1915. According to Valentine, these events reveal how “tensions develop when roles of authority are not clearly defined.” His research follows the decisions that eventually clarify the understanding that Ellen White’s writings and inspiration belong to the church as a whole.

Valentine’s book was originally published by the Institute of Interdisciplinary Asian and Adventist Studies at what is now Asia-Pacific International University in Thailand. The third edition of *The Struggle for the Prophetic Heritage* was published by Oak and Acorn Publishing, an initiative of the Ministerial Association and the Communication & Community

Continued on page 65
Adventist Health Launches Second Season of The Together Inspired Podcast

By Jenni Glass

A dventist Health, the nonprofit health care organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church on the west coast, recently launched its second season of one of its weekly podcasts. The Together Inspired Podcast is intended to inspire listeners to live God’s love at home, at work, and in the community.

In the first season of The Together Inspired Podcast, host Pastor Alex Bryan interviewed leaders from across Adventist Health looking at a variety of topics about leadership, community impact, and what it looks like to be a faith-based organization.

“Our identity in a Jesus vision of healthcare is the total transformation of a municipality, a city, a town, a county, that is going to be changed thoroughly because of our presence,” said Bryan, Mission and Culture executive. “A presence that’s not just transactional—it’s a larger view of changing the world.”

In the coming months, Adventist Health plans to launch new projects related to the work of mission and culture at Adventist Health. Feedback is welcomed from listeners! To share your thoughts, email podcast@ah.org.

Adventist Health podcasts can be found on all major platforms, such as Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, SoundCloud, Stitcher, TuneIn, or on their website, AdventistHealth.org/podcast.

Pastor Alex Bryan interviews musician Tad Worku.
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**Payment in advance must accompany all classified advertisements.**

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 Classified ads must be sent with payment to the Recorder office at 5111 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai, CA 93025. Display ads should be arranged with the editor (info@adventistfaith.com).

**Display Rates (Full Color Only)**

Back cover: $4,200; full page, $3,800; 1/2 pg., $2,200; 1/4 pg., $1,200; 1/8 pg., $700; $160 per column inch.

**Classified Rates**

$70 for 50 words; 75 cents each additional word.

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**Information**

Circulation is approximately 76,000 homes, and magazines are scheduled to arrive in homes by the last Thursday of the previous month. For more information about advertising, please click on the Advertising tab at www.pacificunionrecorder.com, email info@adventistfaith.com, or call 805-413-7280.

**2019-2020 Deadlines**

These are the advertising deadlines for the Recorder. Your local conference news deadlines will be earlier.

December: November 4
January: December 4

**Contributions**

The Recorder pages are assigned to the local conferences, colleges, and health care institutions, and all content comes through the communication departments in those organizations. If you have a news story/idea, calendar announcement, etc., please contact your local communication department.

See the masthead for contact information. Want tips for writing for us? See www.dailywritingtips.com/the-art-of-writing-news.

Women’s Turning Points Conference (Nov. 9) 8:30 a.m.–5 p.m. Redding Adventist Academy, 1356 East Cypress Avenue, Redding. Keynote speaker: Dorothy Means, Pacific Union Conference Women’s Ministries director. Learn from a variety of breakout sessions. Lunch included. $40. Info: nccwmab@nccsda.com, 916-642-9417 or www.nccsda.com/turningpoints.

Santa Rosa Church 150th Anniversary (Nov. 15–16) Santa Rosa church, 840 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa. First Adventist church west of the Rocky Mountains. Fri., 6 p.m., “Reminisce” reception, light supper, interactive discussion of early church in California with Ray Tetz, Pacific Union communication director. Sab., 9 a.m., pancake breakfast; 9:45 a.m., The Gathering: 10 a.m., Sabbath School; 11 a.m., Worship featuring North American Division President Dan Jackson. Lunch provided. 840 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa. Info: church office, 707-578-8883.


Women’s Koinonia Mission Trip (Dec. 4-15) Saint Ann’s Bay, Jamaica. Impact lives through outreach at five evangelistic sites around the North Jamaica Conference. Men, women, and children (accompanied by adult) are invited! Conduct evangelistic meetings, children’s ministry, health/eye clinics, church repair/maintenance project. Info and registration: www.qhministries.org/portal-missions.

Drive-thru Nativity (Dec. 6–7) 7-9 p.m. Sacramento Capitol City church, 6701 Lemon Hill Avenue, Sacramento. Experience nine scenes from the birth of Christ from your car or with a guided walking tour. Drive time is less than 10 minutes. Hot chocolate, apple cider. Free! Info: church office, 916-381-5353.


Pacific Union College College Days are Nov. 3–4. Come find your place at PUC during our annual College Days event. Sign up at puc.edu/visit. Can’t make it during these dates? Schedule a personalized visit! Your adventure awaits.

The annual Maxwell Golf Tournament is Friday, Nov. 8, at Silverado Country Club & Resort in Napa. Register at maxwellcup.com.

Christmas on the Hill: This year’s musical celebration of our Savior’s birth will take place Dec. 6-7. Concerts featuring PUC’s Orchestra, Symphonic Winds Ensemble, Chorale, Handbell Choir, and Vox Pro Musica. Admission free; all are welcome! For details, visit puc.edu/calendar, or email music@puc.edu.

We’re hiring! View current PUC job listings at puc.edu/careers.

PUC Now: Sign up to receive PUC’s monthly e-newsletter with links to news, events, and more. Visit puc.edu/newsletter today.

Southeastern California Conference Animal Vespers (Nov. 2) 5 p.m. Loma Linda University church, 11125 Campus St., Loma Linda. “Their Blood Runs Cold: Reptiles.” There is an hour-long program in the sanctuary and an hour outside to see the animals up close and hold them. Info: lluc.org.

Church Planters Boot Camp (Nov. 7–10) Pine Springs Ranch, 58000 Apple Canyon Rd., Mountain Center. The three-day experience has been designed for church planters, pastors, volunteer lay pastors, church planting core teams, and conference/union leaders involved in or planning to plant a church between now and 2021. Info and registration: https://www.adventsource.org/events/church-plant-boot-camp-west-591.

Equipped2Serve (Nov. 9) 3 p.m. San Diego Academy, 2800 E. 4th St., National City. As part of SECC’s strategic initiative to “equip,” this training helps lay people discover how to best serve their church and community. Speakers will present on various topics related to church ministries. Info: ateel@seccsda.org, 951-509-2287.

25th Annual Community Christmas Celebration featuring Handel’s Messiah (Dec. 1) 3 p.m., Palm Springs church, 620 South Sunrise Way, Palm Springs. Doors open at 2:30 p.m. Event features full orchestra, chorus, soloists, and audience choir. Refreshments will be served after the concert. Info: palmspringsadventist@gmail.com, 760-327-5112.

HeartChild support group meetings (first and third Wednesdays) 6:30-7:30 p.m. For current and prospective foster and adoptive families.
Mt. Rubidoux church, room 203, 5320 Victoria Ave., Riverside. RSVP and info: heartchildministry@gmail.com.

**Southern California Conference**

**GLAR Black & White Holiday Gala (Nov. 2) 6:30 p.m.** This annual Black & White Holiday Gala will benefit Los Angeles Adventist Academy and students of single parents. Black tie event. Renaissance Los Angeles Airport Hotel, 9620 Airport Blvd., Los Angeles 90045. Ticket info: Barbara Spence, 310-457-4703.

**Read and Feed Belize Benefit Concert (Nov. 2) 7 p.m.** Hosted by Ash Reynolds and Tad Worku. At Yojus, 300 Vallejo Dr., Glendale 91206. Info: 818-246-2476 or readandfeedbelize.com.


**Second Saturday Series Concert (Nov. 9) 5 p.m.** Featuring organist Kemp Smeal, including works by Buxtehude, Bach, Hailstork, Elmore, and Viere. Admission is by freewill offering.

**Health Movie Night (Nov. 9) 7:30 p.m.** Movie night and healthy snacks. Pico Rivera Bilingual church, 5058 Cord Ave., Pico Rivera 90660. Info: 562-271-7221 or picomhealthministries@gmail.com.

**Education Summit (Nov. 16) 3-5 p.m.** Two panels of experts in K-12 and higher education, providing an overview of current trends in education and tips on how to maximize educational choices for your children. All parents are welcome! Glendale Adventist Academy, 700 Kimlin Dr., Glendale, 91206. Info: ufsfda@urf.org.

**Indonesian American Church Health Clinic (Nov. 17-18) 8 a.m.-4 p.m.** Free dental, medical, and health services in partnership with AMEN. First come, first served. Indonesian-American church, 803 W. 1st St., Azusa 91702. Info: 626-385-8729.

**Hacienda Heights Church Guest Speaker (Nov. 23) 2 and 3 p.m.** Guest speaker: General Conference Adult Sabbath School Editor Clifford Goldstein. Hacienda Heights church, 2120 S. Stinson Ave., Hacienda Heights 91745. Info: 626-330-4356.

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**At Your Service**

California Adventist Federal Credit Union, your “One Stop Finance Shop.” Serving our Adventist Community for over 65 years with financial products and services, along with wealth building education. Please visit our website at www.SaccreditUnion.com for updates on all that CAFCU has to offer. Call our office and speak to our friendly staff or manager for additional information: 818-246-7241.
Relocating? Apex Moving & Storage has a National Account Contract with the GC for your moving needs! Take advantage of a volume-rated discount. Be assured you are moving with one of the best! Call Marcy at 800-766-1902. Visit us at www.aplexmoving.com/adventist.

SDA Realtor: Relocating, selling, or buying in California? Allow our network of trusted agents to make your local and regional transition plans worry free. Contact Padmini at: Interstate Realty, DRE # 02084028, 909-240-0966, Pkellywalsh47@gmail.com. Ask me about California first-time buyer programs.

Bulletin Board Canvasback Missions accepts vehicle donations of all kinds. Your tax-deductible donation of a running or non-running vehicle can help us share the love of God through health and healing. 707-746-7828 or info@canvasback.org.


Employment Fletcher Academy, Inc. seeks experienced Director of Information Technology, responsible for all IT functions enterprise-wide. At least a bachelor’s in relevant field, plus technical and leadership experience required. Must be comfortable leading a team from a highly visible position, be a member of the SDA church in good standing, and enjoy working with young people in a boarding academy setting. Position is salaried exempt with full benefits package. Send cover letter and resume to Gary Carlson, CEO, at gcarnelson@fletcheracademy.com.

PSR Food Service Director. Pine Springs Ranch Christian Youth Camp and Retreat Center in the San Jacinto mountains seeks a full-time food service director. This position manages hospitality through serving meals to our retreat guests and summer camp campers. The position is responsible for supervision, training, menu planning, budget management, product ordering, food preparation, and other food service-related duties. Successful candidates will have the ability to function in a team environment and will work with diverse ethnic groups. A bachelor’s degree in food service, cuisine, or similar major and three years of experience desired; or equivalent combination of education and experience may be considered for non-degree qualified individuals. For information, contact SECC Human Resources at 951-509-2351.

Southwestern Adventist University seeks Vice President for Academic Administration (VPAA) to be responsible for administering academic policies; planning, implementing, and assessing academic programs; hiring and managing faculty; and reporting to accrediting agencies. Candidate must have earned doctorate degree, administrative experience, and teaching and classroom instruction experience at the college level. Applicant must have strong commitment to Jesus Christ and the teaching and mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, be a member in good standing, and have desire to serve in cooperative, spiritually redemptive, and soul-winning atmosphere. See www.swau.edu/human-resources to apply.

Union College invites applicants for an Accounting teaching faculty position. Qualified applicants will be committed members of the SDA church and have a master’s/doctorate degree or significant experience and willingness to pursue a master’s degree. Find more information at www.ucollege.edu/faculty-openings or contact Lisa Forbes at lisa.l.forbes@ucollege.edu.

The General Conference of SDA has an opening for an associate director of Software Development. This position is full time and is located at the GC headquarters in MD. BA/BS required; master’s preferred. Five or more years of experience in senior level computer responsibilities, including supervisory experience is required. Must be SDA church member. Send resumes to Ruthie Stavenhagen at StavenhagenR@gc.adventist.org.

Wanted: Couple to manage estate home in Rolling Hills, CA (south of Los Angeles), manage staff vendors, housekeeping, animal care, bird care (parrots), light “handyman” duties, some light garden duties. Hours flexible, 4-5 hours per day. Furnished apt. provided in home. Owner travels and needs someone to take charge. Must have a car, be organized, and be meticulous in duties. Call Myrna Frame, 310-613-9549 or email: curtismynna@verizon.net.

Wanted: Experienced, adventurous radio broadcaster! This mission field is not overseas. Details: www.radioofhope.org/production.


Join Timothy R. Jennings, MD (Jan. 17-19) in Texas for the life-changing Power of Love seminar. Revitalize your heart, faith, and witness for these last days! Learn more and secure your spot now at events.comeandreason.com.

For Sale Angwin/Napa Valley jewel. Go to AngwinSolitude.com to see this beautiful 2,300 sq. ft. home and 700 sq. ft. apartment called Pine View Hideaway that rents for $1,500/month. Private 1-acre setting. Offered at $929,000. Call 707-888-8594 or email jhughson@puc.edu.

For Rent To obtain a clear understanding that the Sabbath is the correct day of worship, purchase “God’s Day of Worship,” by Donald E. Casebolt, M.D., and his wife, Donna. A great witnessing tool. Available at the College Place, Washington, ABC store for $1.25 plus tax. Order using this phone number, 509-529-0723.

Missing Members La Mesa Adventist Community, 4207 Spring Gardens Rd., La Mesa, Calif., 91941. Contact Janice Pressler, church clerk, 619-997-2943, or jpressler13@gmail.com. Teri Alcaraz, Judith Anderson, Colleen Baldwin, Anthony Banaga, David Barros, Ruey Bath, Anthony Belgrade, Robert Beltran, Leslie Bigelow, Rachael Bigelow, Blake Blanchard, Thuok Bol, Nyehoth Bol-Diew, John Bradford, Joe Briones, Darrell Brown, Joshua Brown, Tina Bryant, Daisylee Burgess, Patricia Byers, David Cartwright, Virginia Casey, Nyarok Chan, Kevin Chimel, Natasha Cleaver, William Cleaver, Chaunda Clifton, Shelby Cobbs, David Cramar, Walter Crampton,

**Victorville Seventh-day Adventist Church**, 16070 Lorene Dr., Victorville, Calif., 92395; vvsdachurch@gmail.com or call 760-245-3620. Alicia Alford, Derek Alford, Camille C. Allen, Charlene Anderson, Byron Ash, Mona Auxier, Java Beck, Julia E. Benson, Polly Berseth, Georgia Biggie, Willis Bolden, Jane Brackett, Greg Bray, Angela Bush, Dora Cardona, Donn Carter, Heidi Carter, Angelina D. Colon, Carol Cook, Michael S. Cook, Abel Coss, Kimberly A. Coss, Lourdes Coss, Leroy Cubberley, Pas Velasco Del Barrio, James Deloach, Maria Driscoll, Joe Ernst, Terrie Lynn Evans, Roxanne Freck, Kim Gagnon, Ronnie Gray, Ronald Guda, Christine Hickman, Lee J. Hill, Zakiya Holman, Rex Howard, Tara Howard, Sherry Hueth, Brandy Hunt, Gary Jesness, Genevieve Johnson, Briana Jones, Katherine Kieper, John Laird, Penny Laird, Roscoe Lynch III, Dorothy Sharee Lynch, Sam Manoram, Andrew McIntosh, Alba Mejia, Diane Morgan Messer, Cheryl M. Mitchell, James Page, Michael Page, Regena Page, Georgia Patino, Phyllis Rowe, Shannon Rowe, Sondra Rowe, Don Saknit, Melinda Salazar, Andrew Thomas Schwartz, Darlene Self, Sasonya Smith, Diane Stagnitto, Tina Stiles, Rebecca Van Antwerp, Conny Vincent, Dion R. Vincent, Jason Wicker, Oliver Will, Kathryn Zike.

**Real Estate**


**Vacation Opportunities**

**Maui Vacation Condo in Kihei.** Relaxing and affordable. Only a 3-minute walk to the beach! 1-bdrm w/king bed. Clean, comfortable, well-maintained. Sleeps 4. Fully-furnished kitchen, washer/dryer and more! Free parking, Wi-Fi, and calls to U.S./Canada. Friendly Kihei SDA church nearby. Visit us at: <http://www.vrbo.com/62799> Email: mauivista1125@gmail.com or call Mark 909-800-9841.

**Sunriver, Central Oregon.** Four-bedroom vacation home on the North Woodlands golf course. Two master king suites, two queens, one bunk set, hot tub, loft, Jacuzzi bath, gas log fireplace, BBQ, W/D, bikes, all resort amenities, sleeps 10, no smoking, no pets. For rates, photos, and reservations, call: 541-279-9553, or email, schultz@crestviewcable.com.

**AT REST**


**Bullock, Gordon Edmund** – b. Oct. 29, 1925, Sanitarium, Calif.; d. Aug. 8, 2019, Chico, Calif. Survivors: wife, Audrey; daughter, Cindy Waring; stepsons, Paul Wilcox, Dan Wilcox; stepdaughters, Wendy Barlow, Debbie Urquhart; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; five step-grandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Served at Loma Linda Foods and Columbia Union College; was a missionary in the Philippines, and Singapore; served as treasurer for the Central California Conference; volunteer chaplain, Feather River Hospital.

**Drury, Alice** – b. Aug. 15, 1925, Lapel, Ind.; d. Sept. 4, 2019, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: son, Dennis; daughters, Jennie, Linda Rossenquist; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Served as an educator for many years, teaching junior high and high school at La Sierra Academy and other schools.

**Frost, Gary Preston** – b. July 28, 1940, Shafter, Calif.; d. Aug. 31, 2019, Temecula, Calif. Survivors: wife, Ann; son, Andrew; daughter, Rebecca; 2 grandchildren. He served as a principal and teacher in the Potomac and Atlantic Union conferences.


**Johnson, C. Delmar** – b. April 24, 1927, Portland, Ore.; d. Sept. 4, 2019, Loma Linda, Calif. Survivors: wife, Thelma; son, Walt; daughter, Laurel; one grandchild. He served as a lifelong missionary surgeon to Japan and Singapore.


**Tillay, E. Wayne** – b. Feb. 26, 1925, Smith Valley/Yerington, Nev.; d. May 5, 2019, Angwin, Calif. Survivors: wife, Mary; son, David; daughter, LeAnne Zumwalt; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Professor of chemistry at Pacific Union College.


Charitable Gift Annuities—a Win-Win for All

Charitable Gift Annuities make sense. An Adventist couple from California began funding their first CGA when they turned 50. They were smart about charitable tax deductions and a lifetime stream of income for their retirement. Today, they are in their 70’s and have been re-investing in CGA’s that will benefit multiple entities they are passionate about. They are currently receiving annuity payments of $98,000 per year* with $65,000 of it as tax free income. A win-win for all!

Consider leaving a legacy of generosity and love for your favorite charities and fund your retirement with a Charitable Gift Annuity.*

*Payout rate on a CGA is based on age.

This information is not intended to provide advice for any specific situation. Advice from a qualified attorney and/or tax accountant should always be obtained before implementing any of the strategies described.
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